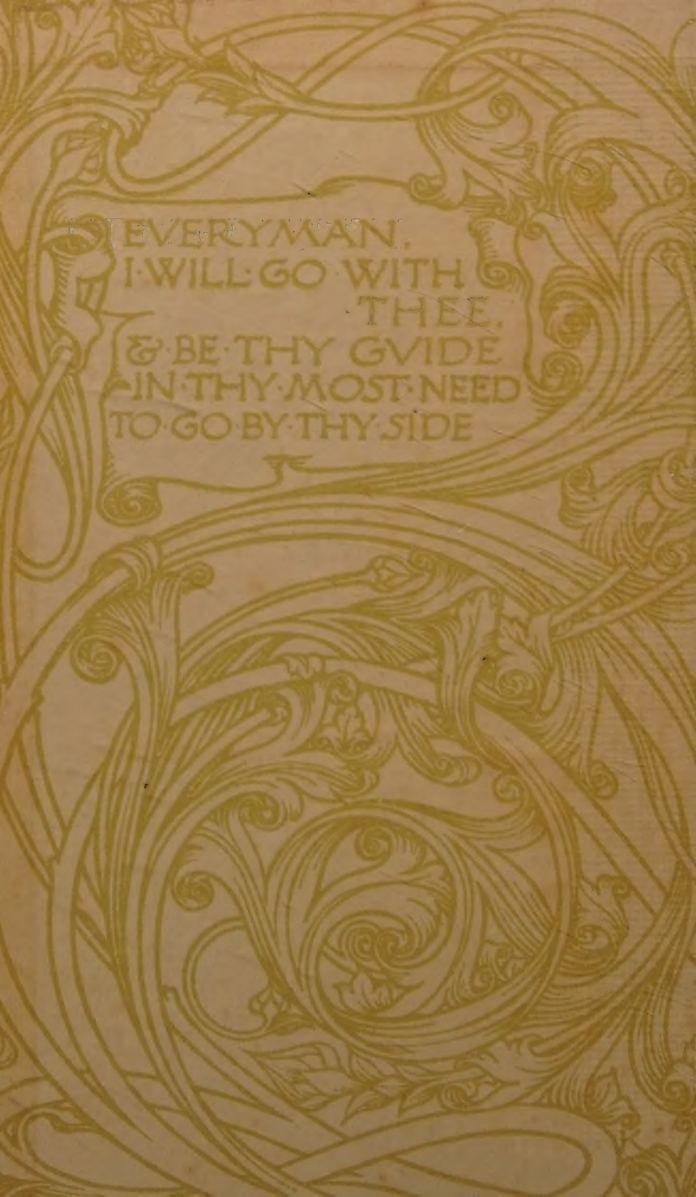
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FIVE DIALOGUES of PLATO bearing on POETIC INSPIRATION

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INTRODUCTION

PLATO wrote no systematic treatise on philosophy, not because he was not a systematic thinker: all his writings are expressions of a single outlook on reality, a system which though it may perhaps show signs of development, yet always preserves its unity: but he expounded it in a series of dialogues each of which stands by itself complete. In each some separate aspect of life or reality, some separate problem for thought to unravel is the starting-point and centre of the discussion. Only the solutions have a common unity: for all these various problems when discussed lead the inquiry back to a conception of the relation between sense and thought which is the centre of Plato's philosophy. The five dialogues in this volume, however, have been brought together because they all throw some light on a special side of Plato's teaching, his doctrine of the place and importance of intuition or inspiration, however we describe that immediate element in thought which can be distinguished from that other element which is teachable and reducible to rules. In each of these dialogues, though for different purposes and from different points of view, Plato expounds that part of his system which has attracted the attention and admiration of great poets and lovers of poetry, and which when developed by later thinkers who lacked Plato's devotion to exact logical thinking and his interest in science, proved the source of much later mysticism. As Plato wrote no systematic treatise on philosophy, so he wrote no æsthetic. But these dialogues present the materials for a Platonic æsthetic, or rather for an æsthetic in accordance with the general principles of Platonic Philosophy, but which Plato himself would probably have disowned. For we must not forget that of all philosophers Plato has proved pre-eminently the philosopher of the poet and the mystic, if his system has seemed to lovers of poetry to furnish an explanation

of the mysterious insight of the artist into reality, he was also the philosopher who proclaimed most insistently the ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry, and in pursuance of that quarrel argued that art was an imitation of an imitation, three times removed from truth. While other philosophers have regarded art as an important activity of the human mind, to be studied like other activities dispassionately and impartially, Plato rarely refers expressly to art without denouncing it as a sham and a deception. The explanation of this paradox is not far to seek. Plato denounces art because he so intensely felt its power. He was himself both poet and philosopher, and the quarrel between poetry and philosophy was waged in his own breast. He could not afford to pay art the doubtful compliment of calling it an excellent purgative of fear and pity or a useful occupation for leisure time; he could not regard it as a necessary stage on the way to that full enlightenment which is philosophy. He knew that the claims of art were too imperious for it to submit to be consigned to a position of decent respectability. He felt that it claimed all or nothing. He would not give it all: for he could not be unfaithful to philosophy: so he must needs fiercely give it nothing.

What, then, are we to think of these dialogues, and especially of the *Symposium* and the *Phædrus*, which seem so obviously to be devoted to the praise of inspiration and to breathe the spirit expressed in—

> the Poets, . . .
> . . . men endowed with highest gifts,
> The vision and the faculty divine?

They may be and are often regarded as the faith of Plato the poet in contrast with Plato the philosopher, as victories won by poetry in the quarrel with philosophy, which was to end in the denunciation of poetry in *Republic*, Book X, and the close, logical reasoning of the Parmenides and the Philebus, where the enthusiasm for beauty seems to have yielded entirely to the enthusiasm for science. Those who deplore the issue of the struggle, welcome the *Symposium* and the *Phædrus* as the achievements of the real Plato, the poet, won before the supposed coldness of old age had extinguished the glow of inspiration in him; those who rejoice in

it, view them as youthful aberrations to be condoned but regretted.

An attentive reading of the dialogues, however, forces us to modify these views. It is not the case that Plato here makes statements about poetry which are inconsistent with his statements in other dialogues. Even in the myth in the *Phædrus*, where Plato classifies souls as having seen more or less of truth, he puts the soul of the poet or imitator low down.

Nor, again, is it possible to divide Plato's system into poetical and non-poetical elements, and say that in these dialogues he emphasizes the more poetical as in other dialogues the more logical elements of his system. For what has always been regarded as the most poetic element in Plato—his theory of ideas—is his most important logical doctrine, and these dialogues, and in them many of the passages which seem most to glow with the enthusiasm of poetry, are of great importance to Plato's logical theory. The truth is that if Plato is poetic, it is not because he ever subordinates philosophy to poetry, but because he takes what may be called a poetic view of knowledge. He emphasizes and asserts the importance in knowledge and in logic of the element of the immediate and the intuitive. While always insisting on exact argument and careful logical reasoning, he makes all reasoning depend finally on intellectual insight and vision which is immediate. Hence if we are to construct from Plato any theory of the function of poetry higher than the low one which he expressly assigns to it, it must be by following him in his appreciation of the *logical* importance of immediate insight, and then by showing how poetry can in its way claim a share in that philosophical insight. The latter part of the argument will not be Plato's, yet it may be based upon Plato's description of beauty.

This impossibility of separation will become clear if we notice shortly the manner in which these various dialogues touch the question with which we are concerned. The *Ion* is a short dialogue, which presents us with the main outline of the problem. Ion the rhapsode is a great interpreter of Homer. He can sway a whole multitude of people by his recitations. He claims to understand all passages in Homer better than any other man; but, Socrates argues, under-

standing and interpretation of special passages needs special knowledge, the knowledge of the carpenter or the physician, which Ion does not possess. If he can interpret Homer thus, it is not through knowledge but through inspiration or madness. The rhapsodist, then, must be either dishonest or inspired. The subject of the *Symposium* is love. Socrates, when it comes to his turn to speak, reports the speech of Diotima, a wise woman of Mantinea. The lover and the philosopher are put together: for love is the desire for immortality in beauty: and as the beauty of the mind is higher than the beauty of the body, so philosophy is higher than earthly love. The vision of true beauty, described in language appropriate to the mystic vision, is the last stage of a progress from particular sensible beauty to universal intellectual beauty, which includes in its higher stages the beauty of the sciences, and "many fair and noble thoughts and notions in boundless love of wisdom." In the *Meno* we start from the logical side. Meno and Socrates are seeking for a definition of virtue, when Meno raises the logical difficulty as to how such search is possible. How can you inquire into what you do not know? Socrates answers by referring to a truth which he has heard from priests and priestesses and from poets, "such as the poet Pindar and other inspired men." The truth is expressed in the doctrine of reminiscence, that "all inquiry and learning is but recollection." It is then proved by a logical analysis of what is involved in the apprehension of geometrical truth. In the beginning of the *Phædo* Socrates says that he has been constantly warned in dreams that he "should make and cultivate music," and that he had imagined "that this was only intended to exhort and encourage me in the study of philosophy, which has always been the pursuit of my life and is the noblest and best of music." The proof of the doctrine of immortality, the subject of the dialogue, involves another proof of the doctrine of reminiscence, which in philosophical language would be described as an argument that experience involves a priori elements which cannot be derived from experience. The dialogue proceeds with an exposition of the theory of ideas, which is a very important statement of the main doctrine of Plato's logic, and the final proof of immortality rests on the kinship of the soul with

the ideas. In contrast with the *Meno* and the *Phædo*, the *Phædrus* opens with a discussion bearing more nearly on the nature of poetry. The formal subject of the dialogue is the nature of rhetoric. It is illustrated by the famous speech in praise of the divine madness of the follower of the Muses, of the lover and of the philosopher, a myth in which the doctrine of reminiscence is introduced again and the vision described of true reality which all souls have experienced before birth. Philosophy is the recollection of that vision, and in that recollection beauty is made to play an especial part. Yet in the discussion on rhetoric which follows, the true rhetorician is described as having knowledge, and his knowledge as consisting in, not a recollection of previous vision, but the power of logical definition and division.

We shall study, therefore, the doctrine of immediacy, not discriminating between its poetical or philosophical importance. The relevant passage in the *Symposium* occurs in Socrates' account of the discourse of Diotima (pp. 210–212). She has explained how love is the desire for immortality in beauty, and how beauty of the soul is greater than beauty of the body. Then it is intimated that what is to follow is a more unusual and advanced revelation. The seeker after beauty, beginning with an appreciation of beautiful bodies, will consider that the beauty in one body is akin to that in another, and that therefore the beauty in all bodies is one and the same. Then as he goes on, he will learn the oneness of the beauty of the soul with the beauty of the sciences, until "he come to a single science of this beauty." That science will be known in this way. After contemplating beautiful objects gradually and in order, "*on a sudden* he beholds a beauty wonderful in its nature." The description of this beauty marks its difference from beautiful objects. It is eternal, unproduced, indestructible: it is not like other things partly beautiful and partly deformed. Neither is it, like the beauty of sensible objects, in any way relative: nor can it, like feet and hands, be seen: "It is eternally of itself and in itself the same in form."

In this description and in what follows these points are to be noticed. Apprehension of this one beauty follows on study of beautiful objects, but is distinct from that study.

The progress towards this one beauty begins with the reflection that beauty in one object must be the same as beauty in another. The search after it is the search for the unity in the many beautiful objects. The apprehension of it is called a sudden appearance; yet it is carefully described in a way which shows that *appearance* cannot be taken literally. Further, all other things are beautiful by participation in it. Compared with it their beauty is relative and comes into being and is destroyed. It has no part in the world of change, and hence in it the desire of the soul for immortality is satisfied. But when we would conclude from this that the lover of this real beauty must be like the poet who is able—

> " To see a world in a grain of sand,
> And a Heaven in a wild flower;
> Hold Infinity in the palm of his hand,
> And Eternity in an hour "—

we have to remember that eternity and changelessness for Plato belong only to all realities apprehended by thought and not by sense, and to them only, and that the progress towards them is intellectual.

His answer in the *Meno* (p. 81) to the difficulty that knowledge can neither be described as mere acquisition from without nor development from within, nor yet is it possible to discriminate without great difficulty the part played by external and internal, is that real knowledge is the eternal possession of the soul. What it knows it has always known. The office of the senses and the visible world is but to stir this forgotten knowledge into recollection. "Since the soul is immortal and has been born many times and has seen the things of this world and of Hades and all things, there is nothing which she has not learned. So that it is no wonder that she should be able to recollect virtue and all other things, seeing that she has learned them previously." This is the glorious truth which Plato has learned from priests and priestesses and poets. But it is not accepted as a solution till it is proved by showing what is involved in the following geometrical reasoning by an untrained mind. Hence the doctrine does not mean what is confessed by Shelley when he says—

"I knew

That I had felt the freshness of that dawn,
Bathed in the same cold dew my brow and hair,
And sate as thus upon that slope of lawn,

Under the selfsame bough, and heard as there
The birds, the fountains and the ocean hold
Sweet talk in music through the enamoured air."

For the other side of Plato's doctrine of reminiscence is the unlikeness and the difference between the visible things now seen and the intelligible realities of which they remind us. When Plato at the end of his *Meno* makes the distinction between knowledge and true opinion, instead of saying, as might be expected, that when a man thinks rightly without being able to explain the reasons for his belief, he is remembering what he has learnt before but not remembering it all, he says that reminiscence is only of knowledge, not of right opinion. We recollect the cause, and it is "the tie of cause" which transforms right opinion into knowledge. The *Phædo* emphasizes this distinction between the visible and the intelligible. The passage there (pp. 73–77) on the doctrine of reminiscence is much more explicit than that in the *Meno*. Socrates first observes that recollection always involves noticing "whether the reminding object in any way falls short in its resemblance to that which is recollected." He then gives as his example the equal. We are reminded of the equal by stones and sticks and other things; but the equal is "something different beside all these." For equal stones and sticks sometimes appear unequal, but equality is never inequality. And he argues that in using the predicate "equal" of visible things, we are judging them by a standard which cannot have been got from them, inasmuch as no visible things show more than an approximation to perfect equality. The notion of perfect equality itself, then, must be got elsewhere. We cannot get it without the senses, but "all the objects of the senses aim at real equality and fall short of it." Therefore before we begin to experience anything we must have a knowledge of the real equality. The argument is not confined to equality. It holds of "the real beauty and the real goodness and justice and holiness, and all those things which in the

process of asking and answering questions we seal with the title of ' the real '." Throughout the *Phædo*, as we have noticed, the argument asserts the kinship of the soul with these intelligible, changeless realities, the Platonic ideas. This kinship is the basis of Plato's arguments for the immortality of the soul, but it also implies distinction between soul and body and distinction between the world of the senses and the world of thought. It is true that he often seems to describe apprehension of the ideas in terms borrowed from æsthetic experience. That was inevitable. For the apprehension of reality in philosophy, though immediate, is only reached at the end of a long process of reflection. No one who has not gone through such a process can have had experience of immediate intellectual apprehension, to such persons, therefore, Plato must describe it in forms of the only immediacy with which they are acquainted, that of æsthetic experience. Now the element of immediacy and intuition is so pre-eminent in art and so concealed in science, that when Plato asserts that all real knowledge is immediate, we easily think that he is saying that knowledge is to be found in art rather than in science. Nothing is further from his intention. It is true that he describes reality as vividly and immediately apprehended, but he is as eager to insist that we come to such immediate apprehension only by transcending the limitations of sense by the power of thought. Though the apprehension is immediate and its own evidence, it is reached in a definite way, which Plato is prepared to describe. This is intended in the expression "in the process of asking and answering questions" of the passage quoted above. That means what Plato calls the logical process of dialectic. Perhaps the clearest account of the matter is given in a passage in the seventh letter. Plato is explaining in a spirit akin to his words in the *Phædrus* (p. 274) why his philosophy cannot be properly stated in words. He shows the defects of all our ways of representing reality. Names, examples and definitions are all defective and may all lead to error. That does not mean that we must acquiesce in the imperfection of thinking, but that we must test and examine all our thought by dialectic. If we do that, he says, after a long and difficult process of "rubbing our conceptions and perceptions

together," suddenly insight and reason flash out, and we know reality as it is. The reality cannot be described, simply because our apprehension of it is immediate, but we can explain the necessary means towards that apprehension.

Plato quarrels with art because in his view it emphasizes and attaches importance to just that sensible side of things, which thought must transcend, and so hinders the mind's progress from sensible to intelligible reality, and also because the processes by which it reaches immediacy are not trustworthy and are as far as possible removed from those logical processes by which truth is attained. The tenth book of the *Republic* is mainly concerned with the first charge. In calling art imitation, Plato treats it as concerned with copying visible reality and that only. Some art is rightly liable to this charge, and the way in which some persons regard all art gives it added justification. At the beginning of the tenth book art is described as dangerous without the antidote of a right understanding of its function. As in the *Ion*, Plato is attacking art which claims to be a short cut to the knowledge possessed by science. In so far as the truth of art is taken to consist in the faithfulness of its representation of the sensible objects to which it refers, these criticisms are just. They seem one-sided because there is no examination of the claim which the artist would certainly make, namely, that art is not concerned with imitating the sensible, but, through the medium of the sensible, represents the eternal realities with which philosophy is concerned.

Plato, in so far as he is explicit on the subject, declares that the eternal realities are to be apprehended in one way only, by hard thinking, yet in what he says of beauty there are undoubtedly suggestions of some such theory of the function of art as the artist might put forward. For that we must turn to the *Phædrus*, remembering only that his attack on the deceptive nature of art is never an attack on beauty; throughout the criticism of Book X he never speaks of beauty at all.

The myth in the *Phædrus* is the second of two speeches on love. In the first speech Socrates attacks love in the name of reason and self-control. The second is a solemn recantation of this blasphemy. Love may be madness, but madness may be divine. A myth based on the doctrine of reminis-

cence explains this. The souls before birth are borne to a place beyond the sky. "Real existence, colourless, formless and intangible, visible only to the intelligence which sits at the helm of the soul, and with which the family of true science is concerned, has its abode in this region. The mind, then, of deity, as it is fed by intelligence and pure science, and the mind of every soul that is destined to receive its due inheritance, is delighted at seeing the essence to which it has been so long a stranger, and by the light of truth is fostered and made to thrive, until, by the revolution of the heavens, it is brought round again to the same point. And during the circuit it sees distinctly absolute justice and absolute temperance and absolute science; not such as they appear in creation, nor under the forms to which we now-a-days give the names of realities, but the justice, the temperance, the science, which exist in that which is real and essential being" (*Phædrus*, p. 247). The souls then sink to earth, forgetting much as they fall, but on earth they take their real rank from their memory of the vision: and Plato puts together in the first class "the philosopher or lover of wisdom, the lover of beauty, the votary of the Muses and of love." Here we find that separation between art as the pursuit of beauty and art as imitation, which we have noticed. For the "poet or any one of those concerned with imitation" ranks low down in the sixth class. Plato explains the power of beauty later in the myth. Beauty moves the soul which sees it on this earth to a remembrance of its vision and a desire after truth, because beauty alone of all realities, is the same here as in the region beyond the sky. "Now in the likenesses existing here of justice and temperance, and all else which souls hold precious, there is no brightness; but through the medium of dull dim instruments, it is but seldom and with difficulty that people are enabled in meeting with the copies to recognize the character of the originals. But beauty not only shone brightly in our view when in the heavenly choir we followed in the band of Zeus, but when we came hither, we found her, through the medium of our clearest sense, gleaming far more clearly than them all. For sight is the keenest of the senses, though it fails of distinguishing wisdom. For terrible would be the passion inspired by wisdom or by any other of those beloved realities, if they exhibited to the eye of sense any

such clear resemblance of themselves as is the image afforded by beauty. No, to beauty alone is the privilege given of being at once most conspicuous and most lovely."

This passage, of course, occurs in a myth, where Plato does not suppose himself to speak with philosophical accuracy; but it expresses a doctrine which is of the essence of Platonism. Philosophy for Plato is a passion. The apprehension of truth needs qualities which are not primarily intellectual, and especially a persistent belief and faith in realities which can only be apprehended after a long and diligent labour. Before we can reach the goal of knowledge, we need to believe in that which we have not yet apprehended, and that faith is given by the appreciation of beauty. If it is not "the substance of things hoped for," it is "the evidence of things not seen." So in Plato's scheme of education in the *Republic* (p. 402), Plato says that the young who before they are capable of understanding reason, are trained to love and welcome beautiful things and to hate ugly things, will "recognize and welcome reason when it comes, for one so trained is akin to reason." Though the final apprehension of reality, which is knowledge, is the work of thought and philosophy, it is beauty which first stirs the soul to turn towards these changeless realities to which she is akin. Further consideration might lead us to argue that if such a part can be played by beauty, then we shall learn more of reality from a representation which is beautiful, than from one which is not; and might make us claim a place for art alongside with those sciences which, as Plato says, use sensible objects as models or copies of the intelligible realities. But Plato himself never held this view of art.

The vision of beauty, according to him, makes us act and feel rightly towards those realities which thought alone apprehends, but it does not make us see them. His own practice of poetry is in agreement with this theory. For the myths of Plato are poems, and he uses myth to describe what is inaccessible to thought, and is careful to say of his myths that while he cannot guarantee the details, he is sure that the attitude which the myth produces in its hearers is the right one. So Plato makes Socrates end the long argument on immortality in the *Phædo* with a myth, of which he says: "No sensible man would insist that all is

exactly as I have related. But seeing that the soul is immortal, I think it is right that a man should venture to think that something of the kind is true of our souls and their mansions. The venture is a noble one; and a man should chant this tale to himself as a solemn incantation."

There is no room here to give an account of the great influence of Plato on English poetry. The *Symposium* and the *Phædrus* played a large part in it. But in considering the Platonism of Spenser and the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, we must remember that it came from Italy; that they read Plato with the help of Marsilio Ficino, as he read him with the help of Plotinus. Platonism of the *Renaissance* was largely a counterblast to Aristotelianism, and exaggerated emphasis was given to the differences between Plato and his disciple, little attention paid to their great general agreement. The result was a Plato devoid of logical theory, whose central doctrines are expressed in his myths. It would be absurd to deny the name of Platonist to Plotinus or Ficino, or to the Cambridge Platonists. Plato was their inspiration; but we shall understand the real Plato better, if, without denying the doctrines which they attribute to him, rather rejoicing in their power and inspiration, we remember that they must be understood in a sense compatible with Plato's devotion to mathematics and logical inquiry and his conviction that knowledge, however immediate and infallible, was only to be attained by hard and patient thinking.

A. D. Lindsay.

Note.—The translations of the *Ion* and *Symposium* in this volume are by Shelley, first published in 1840 in *Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments*, by Percy Bysshe Shelley. Edited by Mrs. Shelley. As the marginal numbering shows, Shelley's translation omits several passages in the *Symposium*, but as these are not of importance for the subject matter of the dialogue, it has been thought best to leave the translation without change. The translation of the *Meno* is by Floyer Sydenham, first published in 1773. The translation of the *Phædo* is by Henry Cary, published in 1848, and the translation of the *Phædrus* by J. Wright, first published in 1848.

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PLATO

ION; OR, OF THE ILIAD

TRANSLATED FROM PLATO

SOCRATES *and* ION

Socrates. HAIL to thee, O Ion! from whence returnest thou amongst us now?—from thine own native Ephesus? St. I. p. 530

Ion. No, Socrates; I come from Epidaurus and the feasts in honour of Æsculapius.

Socrates. Had the Epidaurians instituted a contest of rhapsody in honour of the God?

Ion. And not in rhapsodies alone; there were contests in every species of music.

Socrates. And in which did you contend? And what was the success of your efforts?

Ion. I bore away the first prize at the games, O Socrates.

Socrates. Well done! You have now only to consider how you shall win the Panathenæa.

Ion. That may also happen, God willing.

Socrates. Your profession, O Ion, has often appeared to me an enviable one. For, together with the nicest care of your person, and the most studied elegance of dress, it imposes upon you the necessity of a familiar acquaintance with many and excellent poets, and especially with Homer, the most admirable of them all. Nor is it merely because you can repeat the verses of this great poet, that I envy you, but because you fathom his inmost thoughts. For he is no rhapsodist who does not understand the whole scope and intention of the poet, and is not capable of interpreting it to his audience. This he cannot do without a full comprehension of the meaning of the author he undertakes to illustrate; and worthy, indeed, of envy are those who can fulfil these conditions.

Ion. Thou speakest truth, O Socrates. And, indeed, I have expended my study particularly on this part of my profession. I flatter myself that no man living excels me in the interpretation of Homer; neither Metrodorus of Lampsacus, nor Stesimbrotus the Thasian, nor Glauco, nor any other rhapsodist of the present times can express so many various and beautiful thoughts upon Homer as I can.

Socrates. I am persuaded of your eminent skill, O Ion. You will not, I hope, refuse me a specimen of it?

Ion. And, indeed, it would be worth your while to hear me declaim upon Homer. I deserve a golden crown from his admirers.

Socrates. And I will find leisure some day or other to request you to favour me so far. At present, I will only trouble you with one question. Do you excel in explaining Homer alone, or are you conscious of a
531 similar power with regard to Hesiod and Archilochus?

Ion. I possess this high degree of skill with regard to Homer alone, and I consider that sufficient.

Socrates. Are there any subjects upon which Homer and Hesiod say the same things?

Ion. Many, as it seems to me.

Socrates. Whether do you demonstrate these things better in Homer or Hesiod?

Ion. In the same manner, doubtless; inasmuch as they say the same words with regard to the same things.

Socrates. But with regard to those things in which they differ;—Homer and Hesiod both treat of divination, do they not?

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. Do you think that you or a diviner would make the best exposition, respecting all that these poets say of divination, both as they agree and as they differ?

Ion. A diviner, probably.

Socrates. Suppose you were a diviner, do you not think that you could explain the discrepancies of those poets on the subject of your profession, if you understand their agreement?

Ion. Clearly so.

Socrates. How does it happen then that you are possessed of skill to illustrate Homer, and not Hesiod, or any other poet in an equal degree? Is the subject-matter of the poetry of Homer different from all other poets? Does he not principally treat of war and social intercourse, and of the distinct functions and characters of the brave man and the coward, the professional and private person, the mutual relations which subsist between the Gods and men; together with the modes of their intercourse, the phænomena of Heaven, the secrets of Hades, and the origin of Gods and heroes? Are not these the materials from which Homer wrought his poem?

Ion. Assuredly, O Socrates.

Socrates. And the other poets, do they not treat of the same matter?

Ion. Certainly; but not like Homer.

Socrates. How! Worse?

Ion. Oh! far worse.

Socrates. Then Homer treats of them better than they?

Ion. Oh! Jupiter!—how much better!

Socrates. Amongst a number of persons employed in solving a problem of arithmetic, might not a person know, my dear Ion, which had given the right answer?

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. The same person who had been aware of the false one, or some other?

Ion. The same, clearly.

Socrates. That is, some one who understood arithmetic?

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. Among a number of persons giving their opinions on the wholesomeness of different foods, whether would one person be capable to pronounce upon the rectitude of the opinions of those who judged rightly, and another on the erroneousness of those which were incorrect, or would the same person be competent to decide respecting them both?

Ion. The same, evidently.

Socrates. What would you call that person?

Ion. A physician.

Socrates. We may assert then, universally, that the same person who is competent to determine the truth,
532 is competent also to determine the falsehood of whatever assertion is advanced on the same subject; and, it is manifest, that he who cannot judge respecting the falsehood, or unfitness of what is said upon a given subject, is equally incompetent to determine upon its truth or beauty?

Ion. Assuredly.

Socrates. The same person would then be competent or incompetent for both?

Ion. Yes.

Socrates. Do you not say that Homer and the other poets, and among them Hesiod and Archilochus, speak of the same things, but unequally; one better and the other worse?

Ion. And I speak truth.

Socrates. But if you can judge of what is well said by the one, you must also be able to judge of what is ill said by another, inasmuch as it expresses less correctly.

Ion. It should seem so.

Socrates. Then, my dear friend, we should not err if we asserted that Ion possessed a like power of illustration respecting Homer and all other poets; especially since he confesses that the same person must be esteemed a competent judge of all those who speak on the same subjects; inasmuch as those subjects are understood by him when spoken of by one, and the subject-matter of almost all the poets is the same.

Ion. What can be the reason then, O Socrates, that when any other poet is the subject of conversation I cannot compel my attention, and I feel utterly unable to declaim anything worth talking of, and positively go to sleep? But when any one makes mention of Homer, my mind applies itself without effort to the subject; I awaken as if it were from a trance, and a profusion of eloquent expressions suggest themselves involuntarily?

Socrates. It is not difficult to suggest the cause of this, my dear friend. You are evidently unable to declaim on Homer according to art and knowledge; for

did your art endow you with this faculty, you would be equally capable of exerting it with regard to any other of the poets. Is not poetry, as an art or a faculty, a thing entire and one?

Ion. Assuredly.

Socrates. The same mode of consideration must be admitted with respect to all arts which are severally one and entire. Do you desire to hear what I understand by this, O Ion?

Ion. Yes, by Jupiter, Socrates, I am delighted with listening to you wise men.

Socrates. It is you who are wise, my dear Ion; you rhapsodists, actors, and the authors of the poems you recite. I, like an unprofessional and private man, can only speak the truth. Observe how common, vulgar, and level to the comprehension of any one, is the question which I now ask relative to the same consideration belonging to one entire art. Is not painting an art whole and entire?

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. Did you ever know a person competent to judge of the paintings of Polygnotus, the son of Aglaophon, and incompetent to judge of the production of any other painter; who, on the supposition of the works of other painters being exhibited to him, was wholly at 533
a loss, and very much inclined to go to sleep, and lost all faculty of reasoning on the subject; but when his opinion was required of Polygnotus, or any one single painter you please, awoke, paid attention to the subject, and discoursed on it with great eloquence and sagacity?

Ion. Never, by Jupiter!

Socrates. Did you ever know any one very skilful in determining the merits of Dædalus, the son of Metion, Epius, the son of Panopus, Theodorus the Samian, or any other great sculptor, who was immediately at a loss, and felt sleepy the moment any other sculptor was mentioned?

Ion. I never met with such a person certainly.

Socrates. Nor, do I think, that you ever met with a man professing himself a judge of poetry and rhapody, and competent to criticize either Olympus, Thamyris,

Orpheus, or Phemius of Ithaca, the rhapsodist, who, the moment he came to Ion the Ephesian, felt himself quite at a loss, and utterly incompetent to judge whether he rhapsodised well or ill.

Ion. I cannot refute you, Socrates, but of this I am conscious to myself: that I excel all men in the copiousness and beauty of my illustrations of Homer, as all who have heard me will confess, and with respect to other poets, I am deserted of this power. It is for you to consider what may be the cause of this distinction.

Socrates. I will tell you, O Ion, what appears to me to be the cause of this inequality of power. It is that you are not master of any art for the illustration of Homer, but it is a divine influence which moves you, like that which resides in the stone called magnet by Eudipides, and Heraclea by the people. For not only does this stone possess the power of attracting iron rings, but it can communicate to them the power of attracting other rings; so that you may see sometimes a long chain of rings, and other iron substances, attached and suspended one to the other by this influence. And as the power of the stone circulates through all the links of this series, and attaches each to each, so the Muse, communicating through those whom she has first inspired, to all others capable of sharing in the inspiration, the influence of that first enthusiasm, creates a chain and a succession. For the authors of those great poems which we admire, do not attain to excellence through the rules of any art, but they utter their beautiful melodies of verse in a state of inspiration, and, as it were, *possessed* by a spirit not their own. Thus the composers of lyrical poetry create those admired songs of theirs in a state of divine insanity, like the Corybantes, who lose all control over their reason in the
534 enthusiasm of the sacred dance; and, during this supernatural possession, are excited to the rhythm and harmony which they communicate to men. Like the Bacchantes, who, when possessed by the God, draw honey and milk from the rivers, in which, when they come to their senses, they find nothing but simple water. For the souls of the poets, as poets tell us, have this

*demonic servants

peculiar ministration in the world. They tell us that these souls, flying like bees from flower to flower, and wandering over the gardens and the meadows, and the honey-flowing fountains of the Muses, return to us laden with the sweetness of melody; and arrayed as they are in the plumes of rapid imagination, they speak truth. For a Poet is indeed a thing ethereally light, winged, and sacred, nor can he compose anything worth calling poetry until he becomes inspired, and, as it were, mad, or whilst any reason remains in him. For whilst a man retains any portion of the thing called reason, he is utterly incompetent to produce poetry or to vaticinate. Thus, those who declaim various and beautiful poetry upon any subject, as for instance upon Homer, are not enabled to do so by art or study; but every rhapsodist or poet, whether dithyrambic, encomiastic, choral, epic, or iambic, is excellent in proportion to the extent of his participation in the divine influence, and the degree in which the Muse itself has descended on him. In other respects, poets may be sufficiently ignorant and incapable. For they do not compose according to any art which they have acquired, but from the impulse of the divinity within them; for did they know any rules of criticism according to which they could compose beautiful verses upon one subject, they would be able to exert the same faculty with respect to all or any other. The God seems purposely to have deprived all poets, prophets, and soothsayers of every particle of reason and understanding, the better to adapt them to their employment as his ministers and interpreters; and that we, their auditors, may acknowledge that those who write so beautifully, are possessed, and address us, inspired by the God. Tynnicus the Chalcidean is a manifest proof of this, for he never before composed any poem worthy to be remembered; and yet, was the author of that Pæan which everybody sings, and which excels almost every other hymn, and which he himself acknowledges to have been inspired by the Muse. And, thus, it appears to me that the God proves beyond a doubt, that these transcendent poems are not human as the work of men, but divine as coming from the God. Poets

then are the interpreters of the divinities—each being possessed by some one deity; and to make this apparent, the God designedly inspires the worst poets with the sublimest verse. Does it seem to you that I am in the
535 right, O Ion?

Ion. Yes, by Jupiter! My mind is enlightened by your words, O Socrates, and it appears to me that great poets interpret to us through some divine election of the God.

Socrates. And do not you rhapsodists interpret poets?

Ion. We do.

Socrates. Thus you interpret the interpreters?

Ion. Evidently.

Socrates. Remember this, and tell me; and do not conceal that which I ask. When you declaim well, and strike your audience with admiration; whether you sing of Ulysses rushing upon the threshold of his palace, discovering himself to the suitors, and pouring his shafts out at his feet; or of Achilles assailing Hector; or those affecting passages concerning Andromache, or Hecuba, or Priam, are you then self-possessed? or, rather, are you not rapt and filled with such enthusiasm by the deeds you recite, that you fancy yourself in Ithaca or Troy, or wherever else the poem transports you?

Ion. You speak most truly, Socrates, nor will I deny it; for, when I recite of sorrow my eyes fill with tears; and, when of fearful or terrible deeds, my hair stands on end, and my heart beats fast.

Socrates. Tell me, Ion, can we call him in his senses, who weeps while dressed in splendid garments, and crowned with a golden coronal, not losing any of these things? and is filled with fear when surrounded by ten thousand friendly persons, not one among whom desires to despoil or injure him?

Ion. To say the truth, we could not.

Socrates. Do you often perceive your audience moved also?

Ion. Many among them, and frequently. I, standing on the rostrum, see them weeping, with eyes fixed earnestly on me, and overcome by my declamation. I have need so to agitate them; for if they weep, I laugh,

taking their money; if they should laugh, I must weep, going without it.

Socrates. Do you not perceive that your auditor is the last link of that chain which I have described as held together through the power of the magnet? You rhapsodists and actors are the middle links, of which 536
the poet is the first—and through all these the God influences whichever mind he selects, as they conduct this power one to the other; and thus, as rings from the stone, so hangs a long series of chorus-dancers, teachers, and disciples from the Muse. Some poets are influenced by one Muse, some by another; we call them possessed, and this word really expresses the truth, for they are held. Others, who are interpreters, are inspired by the first links, the poets, and are filled with enthusiasm, some by one, some by another; some by Orpheus, some by Musæus, but the greater number are possessed and inspired by Homer. You, O Ion, are influenced by Homer. If you recite the works of any other poet, you get drowsy, and are at a loss what to say; but when you hear any of the compositions of that poet you are roused, your thoughts are excited, and you grow eloquent;—for what you say of Homer is not derived from any art or knowledge, but from divine inspiration and possession. As the Corybantes feel acutely the melodies of him by whom they are inspired, and abound with verse and gesture for his songs alone, and care for no other; thus, you, O Ion, are eloquent when you expound Homer, and are barren of words with regard to every other poet. And this explains the question you asked, wherefore Homer, and no other poet, inspires you with eloquence. It is that you are thus excellent in your praise, not through science but from divine inspiration.

Ion. You say the truth, Socrates. Yet, I am surprised that you should be able to persuade me that I am possessed and insane when I praise Homer. I think I shall not appear such to you when you hear me.

Socrates. I desire to hear you, but not before you have answered me this one question. What subject

does Homer treat best? for, surely, he does not treat all equally.

Ion. You are aware that he treats of every thing.

Socrates. Does Homer mention subjects on which you are ignorant?

Ion. What can those be?

Socrates. Does not Homer frequently dilate on
537 various arts—on chariot-driving, for instance? if I remember the verses I will repeat them.

Ion. I will repeat them, for I remember them.

Socrates. Repeat what Nestor says to his son Antilochus, counselling him to be cautious in turning, during the chariot-race at the funeral games of Patroclus.

Ion (repeats).

Αὐτὸς δὲ κλινθῆναι εὐπλέκτῳ ἐνὶ δίφρῳ
Ἧκ' ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ τοῖον ἀτὰρ τὸν δεξιὸν ἵππον
Κένσαι ὁμοκλήσας, εἶξαί τέ οἱ ἡνία χερσίν.
Ἐν νύσσῃ δέ τοι ἵππος ἀριστερὸς ἐγχριμφθήτω,
Ὡς ἄν τοι πλήμνη γε δράσσεται ἄκρον ἱκέσθαι
Κύκλου ποιητοῖο· λίθου δ' ἀλέασθαι ἐπαυρεῖν.
Il. ψ. 335.

Socrates. Enough. Now, O Ion, would a physician or a charioteer be the better judge as to Homer's sagacity on this subject?

Ion. Of course, a charioteer.

Socrates. Because he understands the art—or from what other reason?

Ion. From his knowledge of the art.

Socrates. For one science is not gifted with the power of judging of another—a steersman, for instance, does not understand medicine?

Ion. Without doubt.

Socrates. Nor a physician, architecture?

Ion. Of course not.

Socrates. Is it not thus with every art? If we are adepts in one, we are ignorant of another. But first, tell me, do not all arts differ one from the other?

Ion. They do.

Socrates. For you, as well as I, can testify that when we say an art is the knowledge of one thing, we do not mean that it is the knowledge of another.

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. For, if each art contained the knowledge of all things, why should we call them by different names? we do so that we may distinguish them one from the other. Thus, you as well as I, know that these are five fingers; and if I asked you whether we both meant the same thing or another, when we speak of arithmetic—would you not say the same?

Ion. Yes.

Socrates. And tell me, when we learn one art we must both learn the same things with regard to it; and other things if we learn another?

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. And he who is not versed in an art, is not 538
a good judge of what is said or done with respect to it?

Ion. Certainly not.

Socrates. To return to the verses which you just recited, do you think that you or a charioteer would be better capable of deciding whether Homer had spoken rightly or not?

Ion. Doubtless a charioteer.

Socrates. For you are a rhapsodist, and not a charioteer?

Ion. Yes.

Socrates. And the art of reciting verses is different from that of driving chariots?

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. And if it is different, it supposes a knowledge of different things?

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. And when Homer introduces Hecamede, the concubine of Nestor, giving Machaon a posset to drink, and he speaks thus—

> Οἶνῳ Πραμνείῳ, φησίν· ἐπὶ δ' αἶγειον κνῆ τυρὸν
> Κνήστι χαλκείῃ· παρὰ δὲ κρόμυον ποτῷ ὄψον.
> *Il.* υ' 639.

does it belong to the medical or rhapsodical art, to determine whether Homer speaks rightly on this subject?

Ion. The medical.

Socrates. And when he says—

> Ἡ δὲ μολυβδαίνῃ ἰκελη ἐς βυσσὸν ἵκανεν,
> Ἥ τε κατ' ἀγραύλοιο βοὸς κέρας ἐμμεμαυῖα
> Ἔρχεται ὠμηστῆσι μετ' ἰχθύσι πῆμα φέρουσα.
>
> *Il.* ω. 80.

does it belong to the rhapsodical or the piscatorial art, to determine whether he speaks rightly or not?

Ion. Manifestly to the piscatorial art.

Socrates. Consider whether you are not inspired to make some such demand as this to me:—Come, Socrates, since you have found in Homer an accurate description of these arts, assist me also in the inquiry as to his competence on the subject of soothsayers and divination; and how far he speaks well or ill on such subjects; for he often treats of them in the Odyssey, and especially when he introduces Theoclymenus the Soothsayer of the Melampians, prophesying to the Suitors—

539 > Δαιρόνιοι, τί κακὸν τόδε πάσχετε; νυκτὶ μὲν ὑμέων
> Εἰλύαται κεφαλαί τε πρόσωπά τε νέρθε τε γυῖα,
> Οἰμωγὴ δὲ δέδηε, δεδάκρυνται δὲ παρειαί.
> Εἰδώλων τε πλέον πρόθυρον, πλείη δὲ καὶ αὐλὴ
> Ἰεμένων Ἔρεβόσδε ὑπὸ ζόφον· ἠέλιος δὲ
> Οὐρανοῦ ἐξαπόλωλε, κακὴ δ' ἐπιδέδρομεν ἀχλύς.
>
> *Odyss.* ν. 351.

Often, too, in the Iliad, as at the battle at the walls; for he there says—

> Ὄρνις γάρ σφιν ἐπῆλθε περησέμεναι μεμαῶσιν,
> Αἰετὸς ὑψιπέτης, ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ λαὸν ἐέργων,
> Φοινήεντα δράκοντα φέρων ὀνύχεσσι πέλωρον,
> Ζωὸν, ἔτ' ἀσπαίροντα· καὶ οὔπω λήθετο χάρμης.
> Κόψε γὰρ αὐτὸν ἔχοντα κατὰ στῆθος παρὰ δειρήν,
> Ἰδνωθεὶς ὀπίσω· ὁ δ' ἀπὸ ἕθεν ἧκε χαμᾶζε
> Ἀλγήσας ὀδύνῃσι, μέσῳ δ' ἐγκάββαλ' ὁμίλῳ·
> Αὐτὸς δὲ κλάγξας ἔπετο πνοιῇς ἀνέμοιο.
>
> *Il.* μ'.

I assert, it belongs to a soothsayer both to observe and to judge respecting such appearances as these.

Ion. And you assert the truth, O Socrates.

Socrates. And you also, my dear Ion. For we have in our turn recited from the Odyssey and the Iliad,

passages relating to vaticination, to medicine and the piscatorial art; and as you are more skilled in Homer than I can be, do you now make mention of whatever relates to the rhapsodist and his art; for a rhapsodist is competent above all other men to consider and pronounce on whatever has relation to his art.

Ion. Or with respect to everything else mentioned by Homer.

Socrates. Do not be so forgetful as to say everything. A good memory is particularly necessary for a rhapsodist.

Ion. And what do I forget?

540

Socrates. Do you not remember that you admitted the art of reciting verses was different from that of driving chariots?

Ion. I remember.

Socrates. And did you not admit that being different, the subjects of its knowledge must also be different?

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. You will not assert that the art of rhapsody is that of universal knowledge; a rhapsodist may be ignorant of some things.

Ion. Except, perhaps, such things as we now discuss, O Socrates.

Socrates. What do you mean by *such* subjects, besides those which relate to other arts? And with which among them do you profess a competent acquaintance, since not with all?

Ion. I imagine that the rhapsodist has a perfect knowledge of what it is becoming for a man to speak —what for a woman; what for a slave, what for a free man; what for the ruler, what for him who is governed.

Socrates. How! do you think that a rhapsodist knows better than a pilot what the captain of a ship in a tempest ought to say?

Ion. In such a circumstance I allow that the pilot would know best.

Socrates. Has the rhapsodist or the physician the clearest knowledge of what ought to be said to a sick man?

Ion. In that case the physician.

Socrates. But you assert that he knows what a slave ought to say?

Ion. Certainly.

Socrates. To take for example, in the driving of cattle; a rhapsodist would know much better than the herdsman what ought to be said to a slave engaged in bringing back a herd of oxen run wild?

Ion. No, indeed.

Socrates. But what a woman should say concerning spinning wool?

Ion. Of course not.

Socrates. He would know, however, what a man, who is a general, should say when exhorting his troops?

Ion. Yes; a rhapsodist would know that.

Socrates. How! is rhapsody and strategy the same art?

Ion. I know what it is fitting for a general to say.

Socrates. Probably because you are learned in war, O Ion. For if you are equally expert in horsemanship and playing on the harp, you would know whether a man rode well or ill. But if I should ask you which understands riding best, a horseman or a harper, what would you answer?

Ion. A horseman, of course.

Socrates. And if you knew a good player on the harp, you would in the same way say that he understood harp-playing and not riding?

Ion. Certainly.

541 *Socrates.* Since you understand strategy, you can tell me which is the most excellent, the art of war or rhapsody?

Ion. One does not appear to me to excel the other.

Socrates. One is not better than the other, say you? Do you say that tactics and rhapsody are two arts or one?

Ion. They appear to me to be the same.

Socrates. Then a good rhapsodist is also a good general.

Ion. Of course.

Socrates. And a good general is a good rhapsodist?

Ion. I do not say that.

Socrates. You said that a good rhapsodist was also a good general.

Ion. I did.

Socrates. Are you not the best rhapsodist in Greece?

Ion. By far, O Socrates.

Socrates. And you are also the most excellent general among the Greeks?

Ion. I am. I learned the art from Homer.

Socrates. How is it, then, by Jupiter, that being both the best general and the best rhapsodist among us, you continually go about Greece rhapsodising, and never lead our armies? Does it seem to you that the Greeks greatly need golden-crowned rhapsodists, and have no want of generals?

Ion. My native town, O Socrates, is ruled by yours, and requires no general for her wars;—and neither will your city nor the Lacedemonians elect me to lead their armies—you think your own generals sufficient.

Socrates. My good Ion, are you acquainted with Apollodorus the Cyzicenian?

Ion. Who do you mean?

Socrates. He whom, though a stranger, the Athenians often elected general; and Phanosthenes the Andrian, and Heraclides the Clazomenian, all foreigners, but whom this city has chosen, as being great men, to lead its armies, and to fill other high offices. Would not, therefore, Ion the Ephesian be elected and honoured if he were esteemed capable? Were not the Ephesians originally from Athens, and is Ephesus the least of cities? But if you spoke true, Ion, and praise Homer according to art and knowledge, you have deceived me,—since you declared that you were learned on the subject of Homer, and would communicate your knowledge to me—but you have disappointed me, and are far from keeping your word. For you will not explain in what you are so excessively clever, though I greatly desire to learn; but, as various as Proteus, you change from one thing to another, and to escape at last, you disappear in the form of a general, without disclosing your Homeric 542
wisdom. If, therefore, you possess the learning which you promised to expound on the subject of Homer, you

deceive me and are false. But if you are eloquent on the subject of this Poet, not through knowledge, but by inspiration, being possessed by him, ignorant the while of the wisdom and beauty you display, then I allow that you are no deceiver. Choose then whether you will be considered false or inspired?

Ion. It is far better, O Socrates, to be thought inspired.

Socrates. It is better both for you and for us, O Ion, to say that you are the inspired, and not the learned, eulogist of Homer.

THE BANQUET

TRANSLATED FROM PLATO

THE PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE

Apollodorus, A friend of Apollodorus, Glauco, Aristodemus, Socrates, Agathon, Phœdrus, Pausanias, Eryximachus, Aristophanes, Diotima, Alcibiades. St. III. p.

172 *Apollodorus.* I think that the subject of your inquiries is still fresh in my memory; for yesterday, as I chanced to be returning home from Phaleros, one of my acquaintance, seeing me before him, called out to me from a distance, jokingly, "Apollodorus, you Phalerian, will you not wait a minute?"—I waited for him, and as soon as he overtook me, "I have just been looking for you, Apollodorus," he said, "for I wished to hear what those discussions were on Love, which took place at the party, when Agathon, Socrates, Alcibiades, and some others, met at supper. Some one who heard it from Phœnix, the son of Philip, told me that you could give a full account, but he could relate nothing distinctly himself. Relate to me, then, I entreat you, all the circumstances. I know you are a faithful reporter of the discussions of your friends; but, first tell me, were you present at the party or not?"

"Your informant," I replied, "seems to have given you no very clear idea of what you wish to hear, if he thinks that these discussions took place so lately as that I could have been of the party."—"Indeed, I thought so," replied he.—"For how," said I, "O Glauco! could I have been present? Do you not know that Agathon has been absent from the city many years? But, since I began to converse with Socrates, and to observe each day all his words and actions, three years are scarcely past. Before this time I wandered about wherever it 173 might chance, thinking that I did something, but being in truth, a most miserable wretch, not less than you are

now, who believe that you ought to do anything rather than practise the love of wisdom."—"Do not cavil," interrupted Glauco, "but tell me, when did this party take place?"

"Whilst we were yet children," I replied, "when Agathon first gained the prize of tragedy, and the day after that on which he and the chorus made sacrifices in celebration of their success."—"A long time ago, it seems. But who told you all the circumstances of the discussion? Did you hear them from Socrates himself?" "No, by Jupiter! But the same person from whom Phœnix had his information, one Aristodemus, a Cydathenean,—a little man who always went about without sandals. He was present at this feast, being, I believe, more than any of his contemporaries, a lover and admirer of Socrates. I have questioned Socrates concerning some of the circumstances of his narration, who confirms all that I have heard from Aristodemus." —"Why, then," said Glauco, "why not relate them, as we walk, to me? The road to the city is every way convenient, both for those who listen and those who speak."

Thus as we walked I gave him some account of those discussions concerning Love; since, as I said before, I remember them with sufficient accuracy. If I am required to relate them also to you, that shall willingly be done; for, whensoever either I myself talk of philosophy, or listen to others talking of it, in addition to the improvement which I conceive there arises from such conversation, I am delighted beyond measure; but whenever I hear your discussions about moneyed men and great proprietors, I am weighed down with grief, and pity you, who, doing nothing, believe that you are doing something. Perhaps you think that I am a miserable wretch; and, indeed, I believe that you think truly. I do not think, but well know, that you are miserable.

Companion. You are always the same, Apollodorus —always saying some ill of yourself and others. Indeed, you seem to me to think every one miserable except Socrates, beginning with yourself. I do not

know what could have entitled you to the surname of the "Madman," for, I am sure, you are consistent enough, for ever inveighing with bitterness against yourself and all others, except Socrates.

Apollodorus. My dear friend, it is manifest that I am out of my wits from this alone—that I have such opinion as you describe concerning myself and you.

Companion. It is not worth while, Apollodorus, to dispute now about these things; but do what I entreat you, and relate to us what were these discussions.

Apollodorus. They were such as I will proceed to tell you. But let me attempt to relate them in the order which Aristodemus observed in relating them to me. 174
He said that he met Socrates washed, and, contrary to his usual custom, sandaled, and having inquired whither he went so gaily dressed, Socrates replied, "I am going to sup at Agathon's; yesterday I avoided it, disliking the crowd, which would attend at the prize sacrifices then celebrated; to-day I promised to be there, and I made myself so gay, because one ought to be beautiful to approach one who is beautiful. But you, Aristodemus, what think you of coming uninvited to supper?"—"I will do," he replied, "as you command."—"Follow, then, that we may, by changing its application, disarm that proverb which says, *To the feasts of the good, the good come uninvited.* Homer, indeed, seems not only to destroy, but to outrage the proverb; for, describing Agamemnon as excellent in battle, and Menelaus but a faint-hearted warrior, he represents Menelaus as coming uninvited to the feast of one better and braver than himself."—Aristodemus hearing this, said, "I also am in some danger, Socrates, not as you say, but according to Homer, of approaching like an unworthy inferior, the banquet of one more wise and excellent than myself. Will you not, then, make some excuse for me? for I shall not confess that I came uninvited, but shall say that I was invited by you."—"As we walk together," said Socrates, "we will consider together what excuse to make—but let us go."

Thus discoursing, they proceeded. But, as they

walked, Socrates, engaged in some deep contemplation, slackened his pace, and, observing Aristodemus waiting for him, he desired him to go on before. When Aristodemus arrived at Agathon's house he found the door open, and it occurred somewhat comically, that a slave met him at the vestibule, and conducted him where he found the guests already reclined. As soon as Agathon saw him, "You arrive just in time to sup with us, Aristodemus," he said; "if you have any other purpose in your visit, defer it to a better opportunity. I was looking for you yesterday, to invite you to be of our party; I could not find you anywhere. But how is it that you do not bring Socrates with you?"

But he turning round, and not seeing Socrates behind him, said to Agathon, "I just came hither in his company, being invited by him to sup with you."—"You did well," replied Agathon, "to come; but where is
175 Socrates?"—"He just now came hither behind me; I myself wonder where he can be."—"Go and look, boy," said Agathon, "and bring Socrates in; meanwhile, you, Aristodemus, recline there near Eryximachus." And he bade a slave wash his feet that he might recline. Another slave, meanwhile, brought word that Socrates had retired into a neighbouring vestibule, where he stood, and, in spite of his message, refused to come in.—"What absurdity you talk," cried Agathon, "call him, and do not leave him till he comes."—"Leave him alone, by all means," said Aristodemus, "it is customary with him sometimes to retire in this way and stand wherever it may chance. He will come presently, I do not doubt; do not disturb him."—"Well, be it as you will," said Agathon; "as it is, you boys, bring supper for the rest; put before us what you will, for I resolved that there should be no master of the feast. Consider me, and these, my friends, as guests, whom you have invited to supper, and serve them so that we may commend you."

After this they began supper, but Socrates did not come in. Agathon ordered him to be called, but Aristodemus perpetually forbade it. At last he came in, much about the middle of supper, not having delayed

so long as was his custom. Agathon (who happened to be reclining at the end of the table, and alone,) said, as he entered, "Come hither, Socrates, and sit down by me; so that by the mere touch of one so wise as you are, I may enjoy the fruit of your meditations in the vestibule; for, I well know, you would not have departed till you had discovered and secured it."

Socrates having sat down as he was desired, replied, "It would be well, Agathon, if wisdom were of such a nature, as that when we touched each other, it would overflow of its own accord, from him who possesses much to him who possesses little; like the water in two chalices, which will flow through a flock of wool from the fuller into the emptier, until both are equal. If wisdom had this property, I should esteem myself most fortunate in reclining near to you. I should thus soon be filled, I think, with the most beautiful and various wisdom. Mine, indeed, is something obscure, and doubtful, and dreamlike. But yours is radiant, and has been crowned with amplest reward; for, though you are yet so young, it shone forth from you, and became so manifest yesterday, that more than thirty thousand Greeks can bear testimony to its excellence and loveliness."—"You are laughing at me, Socrates," said Agathon, "but you and I will decide this controversy about wisdom by and bye, taking Bacchus for our judge. At present turn to your supper."

After Socrates and the rest had finished supper, and 176
had reclined back on their couches, and the libations had been poured forth, and they had sung hymns to the god, and all other rites which are customary had been performed, they turned to drinking. Then Pausanias made this kind of proposal. "Come, my friends," said he, "in what manner will it be pleasantest for us to drink? I must confess to you that, in reality, I am not very well from the wine we drank last night, and I have need of some intermission. I suspect that most of you are in the same condition, for you were here yesterday. Now, consider how we shall drink most easily and comfortably."

"'Tis a good proposal, Pausanias," said Aristophanes,

"to contrive, in some way or other, to place moderation in our cups. I was one of those who were drenched last night."—Eryximachus, the son of Acumenius, hearing this, said: "I am of your opinion; I only wish to know one thing—whether Agathon is in the humour for hard drinking?"—"Not at all," replied Agathon, "I confess that I am not able to drink much this evening."—"It is an excellent thing for us," replied Eryximachus, "I mean myself, Aristodemus, Phædrus, and these others, if you who are such invincible drinkers, now refuse to drink. I ought to except Socrates, for he is capable of drinking everything, or nothing; and whatever we shall determine will equally suit him. Since, then, no one present has any desire to drink much wine, I shall perhaps give less offence if I declare the nature of drunkenness. The science of medicine teaches us that drunkenness is very pernicious: nor would I choose to drink immoderately myself, or counsel another to do so, especially if he had been drunk the night before."—"Yes," said Phædrus, the Myrinusian, interrupting him, "I have been accustomed to confide in you, especially in your directions concerning medicine; and I would now willingly do so, if the rest will do the same." All then agreed that they would drink at this present banquet not for drunkenness, but for pleasure.

"Since, then," said Eryximachus, "it is decided that no one shall be compelled to drink more than he pleases, I think that we may as well send away the flute-player to play to herself; or, if she likes, to the women within. Let us devote the present occasion to conversation between ourselves, and if you wish, I will propose to you what shall be the subject of our discussion." All
177 present desired and entreated that he would explain.—"The exordium of my speech," said Eryximachus, "will be in the style of the Menalippe of Euripides, for the story which I am about to tell belongs not to me, but to Phædrus. Phædrus has often indignantly complained to me, saying—'Is it not strange, Eryximachus, that there are innumerable hymns and pæans composed for the other gods, but that not one of the many poets who

spring up in the world have ever composed a verse in honour of Love, who is such and so great a god? Nor any one of those accomplished sophists, who, like the famous Prodicus, have celebrated the praise of Hercules and others, have ever celebrated that of Love; but what is more astonishing, I have lately met with the book of some philosopher, in which salt is extolled on account of its utility, and many other things of the same nature are in like manner celebrated with elaborate praise. That so much serious thought is expended on such trifles, and that no man has dared to this day to frame a hymn in honour of Love, who being so great a deity, is thus neglected, may well be sufficient to excite my indignation.'

"There seemed to me some justice in these complaints of Phædrus; I propose, therefore, at the same time for the sake of giving pleasure to Phædrus, and that we may on the present occasion do something well and befitting us, that this God should receive from those who are now present the honour which is most due to him. If you agree to my proposal, an excellent discussion might arise on the subject. Every one ought, according to my plan, to praise Love with as much eloquence as he can. Let Phædrus begin first, both because he reclines the first in order, and because he is the father of the discussion."

"No one will vote against you, Eryximachus," said Socrates, "for how can I oppose your proposal, who am ready to confess that I know nothing on any subject but love? Or how can Agathon, or Pausanias, or even Aristophanes, whose life is one perpetual ministration to Venus and Bacchus? Or how can any other whom I see here? Though we who sit last are scarcely on an equality with you; for if those who speak before us shall have exhausted the subject with their eloquence and reasonings, our discourses will be superfluous. But in the name of Good Fortune, let Phædrus begin and praise Love." The whole party agreed to what Socrates said, and entreated Phædrus to begin.

What each then said on this subject, Aristodemus 178
did not entirely recollect, nor do I recollect all that he

related to me; but only the speeches of those who said what was most worthy of remembrance. First, then, Phædrus began thus:—

"Love is a mighty deity, and the object of admiration, both to Gods and men, for many and for various claims; but especially on account of his origin. For that he is to be honoured as one of the most ancient of the gods, this may serve as a testimony, that Love has no parents, nor is there any poet or other person who has ever affirmed that there are such. Hesiod says, that first 'Chaos was produced; then the broad-bosomed Earth, to be a secure foundation for all things; then Love.' He says that after Chaos these two were produced, the Earth and Love. Parmenides, speaking of generation, says:—'But he created Love before any of the gods.' Acusiſeus agrees with Hesiod. Love, therefore, is universally acknowledged to be among the oldest of things. And in addition to this, Love is the author of our greatest advantages; for I cannot imagine a greater happiness and advantage to one who is in the flower of youth than an amiable lover, or to a lover, than an amiable object of his love. For neither birth, nor wealth, nor honours, can awaken in the minds of men the principles which should guide those who from their youth aspire to an honourable and excellent life, as Love awakens them. I speak of the fear of shame, which deters them from that which is disgraceful; and the love of glory, which incites to honourable deeds. For it is not possible that a state or private person should accomplish, without these incitements, anything beautiful or great. I assert, then, that should one who loves be discovered in any dishonourable action, or tamely enduring insult through cowardice, he would feel more anguish and shame if observed by the object of his passion, than if he were observed by his father, or his companions, or any other person. In like manner, among warmly attached friends, a man is especially grieved to be discovered by his friend in any dishonourable act. If, then, by any contrivance, a state or army could be composed of friends bound by strong attachment, it is beyond calculation how excellently they

would administer their affairs, refraining from anything base, contending with each other for the acquirement 179
of fame, and exhibiting such valour in battle as that, though few in numbers, they might subdue all mankind. For should one friend desert the ranks or cast away his arms in the presence of the other, he would suffer far acuter shame from that one person's regard, than from the regard of all other men. A thousand times would he prefer to die, rather than desert the object of his attachment, and not succour him in danger.

"There is none so worthless whom Love cannot impel, as it were by a divine inspiration, towards virtue, even so that he may through this inspiration become equal to one who might naturally be more excellent; and, in truth, as Homer says: The God breathes vigour into certain heroes—so Love breathes into those who love, the spirit which is produced from himself. Not only men, but even women who love, are those alone who willingly expose themselves to die for others. Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, affords to the Greeks a remarkable example of this opinion; she alone being willing to die for her husband, and so surpassing his parents in the affection with which love inspired her towards him, as to make them appear, in the comparison with her, strangers to their own child, and related to him merely in name; and so lovely and admirable did this action appear, not only to men, but even to the Gods, that, although they conceded the prerogative of bringing back the spirit from death to few among the many who then performed excellent and honourable deeds, yet, delighted with this action, they redeemed her soul from the infernal regions: so highly do the Gods honour zeal and devotion in love. They sent back indeed Orpheus, the son of Œagrus, from Hell, with his purpose unfulfilled, and, showing him only the spectre of her for whom he came, refused to render up herself. For Orpheus seemed to them, not, as Alcestis, to have dared die for the sake of her whom he loved, and thus to secure to himself a perpetual intercourse with her in the regions to which she had preceded him, but like a cowardly musician, to have contrived to

descend alive into Hell; and, indeed, they appointed as a punishment for his cowardice, that he should be put to death by women.

"Far otherwise did they reward Achilles, the son of Thetis, whom they sent to inhabit the islands of the blessed. For Achilles, though informed by his mother that his own death would ensue upon his killing Hector, but that if he refrained from it he might return home and die in old age, yet preferred revenging and honouring his beloved Patroclus; not to die for him merely, but to disdain and reject that life which he had ceased to share. Therefore the Greeks honoured Achilles beyond all other men, because he thus preferred his friend to all things else.

"On this account have the Gods rewarded Achilles more amply than Alcestis; permitting his spirit to inhabit the islands of the blessed. Hence do I assert that Love is the most ancient and venerable of deities, and most powerful to endow mortals with the possession of happiness and virtue, both whilst they live and after they die."

Thus Aristodemus reported the discourse of Phædrus; and after Phædrus, he said that some others spoke, whose discourses he did not well remember. When they had ceased, Pausanias began thus:—

"Simply to praise Love, O Phædrus, seems to me too bounded a scope for our discourse. If Love were one, it would be well. But since Love is not one, I will endeavour to distinguish which is the Love whom it becomes us to praise, and having thus discriminated one from the other, will attempt to render him who is the subject of our discourse the honour due to his divinity. We all know that Venus is never without Love; and if Venus were one, Love would be one; but since there are two Venuses, of necessity also must there be two Loves. For assuredly are there two Venuses; one, the eldest, the daughter of Uranus, born without a mother, whom we call the Uranian; the other younger, the daughter of Jupiter and Dione, whom we call the Pandemian;—of necessity must there also be two Loves, the Uranian and Pandemian com-

panions of these goddesses. It is becoming to praise all the Gods, but the attributes which fall to the lot of each may be distinguished and selected. For any particular action whatever in itself is neither good nor evil; what we are now doing—drinking, singing, talking, none of these things are good in themselves, but the mode in which they are done stamps them with its own nature; and that which is done well, is good, and that which is done evil, is evil. Thus, not all love, nor every mode of love is beautiful, or worthy of commendation, but that alone which excites us to love worthily. The Love, therefore, which attends upon Venus Pandemos is, in truth, common to the vulgar, and presides over transient and fortuitous connexions, and is worshipped by the least excellent of mankind. The votaries of this deity seek the body rather than the soul, and the ignorant rather than the wise, disdaining all that is honourable and lovely, and considering how they shall best satisfy their sensual necessities. This Love is derived from the younger goddess, who partakes in her nature both of male and female. But the attendant on the other, the Uranian, whose nature is entirely masculine, is the Love who inspires us with affection, and exempts us from all wantonness and libertinism. Those who are inspired by this divinity seek the affections of those who are endowed by nature with greater excellence and vigour both of body and mind. And it is easy to distinguish those who especially exist under the influence of this power, by their choosing in early youth as the objects of their love those in whom the intellectual faculties have begun to develop. For those who begin to love in this manner seem to me to be preparing to pass their whole life together in a community of good and evil, and not ever lightly deceiving those who love them, to be faithless to their vows. There ought to be a law that none should love the very young; so much serious affection as this deity enkindles should not be doubtfully bestowed; for the body and mind of those so young are yet unformed, and it is difficult to foretell what will be their future tendencies and power. The good voluntarily impose this law upon

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themselves, and those vulgar lovers ought to be compelled to the same observance, as we deter them with all the power of the laws from the love of free matrons.
182 For these are the persons whose shameful actions embolden those who observe their importunity and intemperance to assert, that it is dishonourable to serve and gratify the objects of our love. But no one who does this gracefully and according to law, can justly be liable to the imputation of blame.

"Not only friendship, but philosophy and the practice of the gymnastic exercises, are represented as dishonourable by the tyrannical governments under which the barbarians live. For I imagine it would little conduce to the benefit of the governors, that the governed should be disciplined to lofty thoughts, and to the unity and communion of steadfast friendship, of which admirable effects the tyrants of our own country have also learned that Love is the author. For the love of Harmodius and Aristogiton, strengthened into a firm friendship, dissolved the tyranny. Wherever, therefore, it is declared dishonourable in any case to serve and benefit friends, that law is a mark of the depravity of the legislator, the avarice and tyranny of the rulers, and the cowardice of those who are ruled. Wherever it is simply declared to be honourable without distinction of cases, such a declaration denotes dulness and want of subtlety of mind in the authors of the regulation. Here the degrees of praise or blame to be attributed by law are far better regulated; but it is yet difficult to determine the cases to which they should refer.

"It is evident, however, for one in whom passion is enkindled, it is more honourable to love openly than secretly; and most honourable to love the most excellent and virtuous, even if they should be less beautiful than others. It is honourable for the lover to exhort and sustain the object of his love in virtuous conduct. It is considered honourable to attain the love of those whom we seek, and the contrary shameful; and to facilitate this attainment, opinion has given to the lover the permission of acquiring favour by the most extraordinary devices, which if a person should practise for any pur-

pose besides this, he would incur the severest reproof of 183
philosophy. For if any one desirous of accumulating money, or ambitious of procuring power, or seeking any other advantage, should, like a lover seeking to acquire the favour of his beloved, employ prayers and entreaties in his necessity, and swear such oaths as lovers swear, and sleep before the threshold, and offer to subject himself to such slavery as no slave even would endure; he would be frustrated of the attainment of what he sought, both by his enemies and friends, these reviling him for his flattery, those sharply admonishing him, and taking to themselves the shame of his servility. But there is a certain grace in a lover who does all these things, so that he alone may do them without dishonour. It is commonly said that the Gods accord pardon to the lover alone if he should break his oath, and that there is no oath by Venus. Thus, as our law declares, both gods and men have given to lovers all possible indulgence.

"The affair, however, I imagine, stands thus: As I have before said, love cannot be considered in itself as either honourable or dishonourable: if it is honourably pursued, it is honourable; if dishonourably, dishonourable: it is dishonourable basely to serve and gratify a worthless person; it is honourable honourably to serve a person of virtue. That Pandemic lover who loves rather the body than the soul is worthless, nor can be constant and consistent, since he has placed his affections on that which has no stability. For as soon as the flower of the form, which was the sole object of his desire, has faded, then he departs and is seen no more; bound by no faith nor shame of his many promises and persuasions. But he who is the lover of virtuous manners is constant during life, since he has placed himself in harmony and desire with that which is consistent with itself.

"These two classes of persons we ought to distin- 184
guish with careful examination, so that we may serve and converse with the one and avoid the other; determining, by that inquiry, by what a man is attracted, and for what the object of his love is dear to him. On the

same account it is considered as dishonourable to be inspired with love at once, lest time should be wanting to know and approve the character of the object. It is considered dishonourable to be captivated by the allurements of wealth and power, or terrified through injuries to yield up the affections, or not to despise in the comparison with an unconstrained choice all political influence and personal advantage. For no circumstance is there in wealth or power so invariable and consistent, as that no generous friendship can ever spring up from amongst them. We have an opinion with respect to lovers which declares that it shall not be considered servile or disgraceful, though the lover should submit himself to any species of slavery for the sake of his beloved. The same opinion holds with respect to those who undergo any degradation for the sake of virtue. And also it is esteemed among us, that if any one chooses to serve and obey another for the purpose of becoming more wise or more virtuous through the intercourse that might thence arise, such willing slavery is not the slavery of a dishonest flatterer. Through this we should consider in the same light a servitude undertaken for the sake of love as one undertaken for the acquirement of wisdom or any other excellence, if indeed the devotion of a lover to his beloved is to be considered a beautiful thing. For when the lover and the beloved have once arrived at the same point, the province of each being distinguished; the one able to assist in the cultivation of the mind and in the acquirement of every other excellence; the other yet requiring education, and seeking the possession of wisdom; then alone, by the union of these conditions, and in no other case, is it honourable for the beloved to yield up the affections to the lover. In this servitude alone there is no disgrace in being deceived and defeated of the object for which it was undertaken, whereas every other is disgraceful, whether we are deceived or no.

185 "On the same principle, if any one seeks the friendship of another, believing him to be virtuous, for the sake of becoming better through such intercourse and affection, and is deceived, his friend turning out to be

worthless, and far from the possession of virtue; yet it is honourable to have been so deceived. For such a one seems to have submitted to a kind of servitude, because he would endure anything for the sake of becoming more virtuous and wise; a disposition of mind eminently beautiful.

"This is that Love who attends on the Uranian deity, and is Uranian; the author of innumerable benefits both to the state and to individuals, and by the necessity of whose influence those who love are disciplined into the zeal of virtue. All other loves are the attendants on Venus Pandemos. So much, although unpremeditated, is what I have to deliver on the subject of love, O Phædrus."

Pausanias having ceased (for so the learned teach me to denote the changes of the discourse), Aristodemus said that it came to the turn of Aristophanes to speak; but it happened that, from repletion or some other cause, he had an hiccough which prevented him; so he turned to Eryximachus, the physician, who was reclining close beside him, and said—"Eryximachus, it is but fair that you should cure my hiccough, or speak instead of me until it is over."—"I will do both," said Eryximachus; "I will speak in your turn, and you, when your hiccough has ceased, shall speak in mine. Meanwhile, if you hold your breath some time, it will subside. If not, gargle your throat with water; and if it still continue, take something to stimulate your nostrils, and sneeze; do this once or twice, and even though it should be very violent it will cease."—"Whilst you speak," said Aristophanes, "I will follow your directions."—Eryximachus then began:—

"Since Pausanias, beginning his discourse excellently, placed no fit completion and development to it, I think it necessary to attempt to fill up what he has left 186
unfinished. He has reasoned well in defining love as of a double nature. The science of medicine, to which I have addicted myself, seems to teach me that the love which impels towards those who are beautiful, does not subsist only in the souls of men, but in the bodies also of those of all other living beings which are produced

upon earth, and, in a word, in all things which are. So wonderful and mighty is this divinity, and so widely is his influence extended over all divine and human things! For the honour of my profession, I will begin by adducing a proof from medicine. The nature of the body contains within itself this double love. For that which is healthy and that which is diseased in a body differ and are unlike: that which is unlike loves and desires that which is unlike. Love, therefore, is different in a sane and in a diseased body. Pausanias has asserted rightly that it is honourable to gratify those things in the body which are good and healthy, and in this consists the skill of the physician; whilst those which are bad and diseased ought to be treated with no indulgence. The science of medicine, in a word, is a knowledge of the love affairs of the body, as they bear relation to repletion and evacuation; and he is the most skilful physician who can trace those operations of the good and evil love, can make the one change places with the other, and attract love into those parts from which he is absent, or expel him from those which he ought not to occupy. He ought to make those things which are most inimical, friendly, and excite them to mutual love. But those things are most inimical which are most opposite to each other; cold to heat, bitterness to sweetness, dryness to moisture. Our progenitor, Æsculapius, as the poets inform us, (and indeed I believe them,) through the skill which he possessed to inspire love and concord in these contending principles, established the science of medicine.

"The gymnastic arts and agriculture, no less than
187 medicine, are exercised under the dominion of this God. Music, as any one may perceive who yields a very slight attention to the subject, originates from the same source; which Heraclitus probably meant, though he could not express his meaning very clearly in words, when he says, 'One though apparently differing, yet so agrees with itself, as the harmony of a lyre and a bow.' It is great absurdity to say that a harmony differs, and can exist between things whilst they are dissimilar; but probably he meant that from sounds which first differed,

like the grave and the acute, and which afterwards agreed, harmony was produced according to musical art. For no harmony can arise from the grave and the acute whilst yet they differ. But harmony is symphony: symphony is, as it were, concord. But it is impossible that concord should subsist between things that differ, so long as they differ. Between things which are discordant and dissimilar there is then no harmony. A rhythm is produced from that which is quick, and that which is slow, first being distinguished and opposed to each other, and then made accordant; so does medicine, no less than music, establish a concord between the objects of its art, producing love and agreement between adverse things.

"Music is then the knowledge of that which relates to love in harmony and system. In the very system of harmony and rhythm, it is easy to distinguish love. The double love is not distinguishable in music itself; but it is required to apply it to the service of mankind by system and harmony, which is called poetry, or the composition of melody; or by the correct use of songs and measures already composed, which is called discipline; then one can be distinguished from the other, by the aid of an extremely skilful artist. And the better love ought to be honoured and preserved for the sake of those who are virtuous, and that the nature of the vicious may be changed through the inspiration of its spirit. This is that beautiful Uranian love, the attendant on the Uranian muse: the Pandemian is the attendant of Polyhymnia; to whose influence we should only so far subject ourselves, as to derive pleasure from it without indulging to excess; in the same manner as, according to our art, we are instructed to seek the pleasures of the table, only so far as we can enjoy them without the consequences of disease. In music, therefore, and in medicine, and in all other things, human and divine, this double love ought to be traced and discriminated; for it is in all things.

"Even the constitution of the seasons of the year is 188
penetrated with these contending principles. For so often as heat and cold, dryness and moisture, of which

I spoke before, are influenced by the more benignant love, and are harmoniously and temperately intermingled with the seasons, they bring maturity and health to men, and to all the other animals and plants. But when the evil and injurious love assumes the dominion of the seasons of the year, destruction is spread widely abroad. Then pestilence is accustomed to arise, and many other blights and diseases fall upon animals and plants: and hoar frosts, and hails, and mildew on the corn, are produced from that excessive and disorderly love, with which each season of the year is impelled towards the other; the motions of which and the knowledge of the stars, is called astronomy. All sacrifices, and all those things in which divination is concerned (for these things are the links by which is maintained an intercourse and communion between the Gods and men), are nothing else than the science of preservation and right government of Love. For impiety is accustomed to spring up, so soon as any one ceases to serve the more honourable Love, and worship him by the sacrifice of good actions; but submits himself to the influences of the other, in relation to his duties towards his parents, and the Gods, and the living, and the dead. It is the object of divination to distinguish and remedy the effects of these opposite loves; and divination is therefore the author of the friendship of Gods and men, because it affords the knowledge of what in matters of love is lawful or unlawful to men.

"Thus every species of love possesses collectively a various and vast, or rather universal power. But love which incites to the acquirement of its objects according to virtue and wisdom, possesses the most exclusive dominion, and prepares for his worshippers the highest happiness through the mutual intercourse of social kindness which it promotes among them, and through the benevolence which he attracts to them from the Gods, our superiors.

"Probably in thus praising Love, I have unwillingly omitted many things; but it is your business, O Aristophanes, to fill up all that I have left incomplete; or, if

you have imagined any other mode of honouring the divinity: for I observe your hiccough is over."

"Yes," said Aristophanes, "but not before I applied 189
the sneezing. I wonder why the harmonious construction of our body should require such noisy operations as sneezing; for it ceased the moment I sneezed."—"Do you not observe what you do, my good Aristophanes?" said Eryximachus; "you are going to speak, and you predispose us to laughter, and compel me to watch for the first ridiculous idea which you may start in your discourse, when you might have spoken in peace."—"Let me unsay what I have said, then," replied Aristophanes, laughing. "Do not watch me, I entreat you; though I am not afraid of saying what is laughable (since that would be all gain, and quite in the accustomed spirit of my muse), but lest I should say what is ridiculous."—"Do you think to throw your dart, and escape with impunity, Aristophanes? Attend and what you say be careful you maintain; then, perhaps, if it pleases me, I may dismiss you without question."

"Indeed, Eryximachus," proceeded Aristophanes, "I have designed that my discourse should be very different from yours and that of Pausanias. It seems to me that mankind are by no means penetrated with a conception of the power of Love, or they would have built sumptuous temples and altars, and have established magnificent rites of sacrifice in his honour; he deserves worship and homage more than all the other Gods, and he has yet received none. For Love is of all the Gods the most friendly to mortals; and the physician of those wounds, whose cure would be the greatest happiness which could be conferred upon the human race. I will endeavour to unfold to you his true power, and you can relate what I declare to others.

"You ought first to know the nature of man, and the adventures he has gone through; for his nature was anciently far different from that which it is at present. First, then, human beings were formerly not divided into two sexes, male and female; there was also a third, common to both the others, the name of which remains

though the sex itself has disappeared. The androgynous sex, both in appearance and in name, was common both to male and female; its name alone remains, which labours under a reproach.

"At the period to which I refer, the form of every human being was round, the back and the sides being
190 circularly joined, and each had four arms and as many legs; two faces fixed upon a round neck, exactly like each other; one head between the two faces; four ears, and everything else as from such proportions it is easy to conjecture. Man walked upright as now, in whatever direction he pleased; but when he wished to go fast he made use of all his eight limbs, and proceeded in a rapid motion by rolling circularly round,—like tumblers, who, with their legs in the air, tumble round and round. We account for the production of three sexes by supposing that, at the beginning, the male was produced from the sun, the female from the earth; and that sex which participated in both sexes, from the moon, by reason of the androgynous nature of the moon. They were round, and their mode of proceeding was round, from the similarity which must needs subsist between then and their parent.

"They were strong also, and had aspiring thoughts. They it was who levied war against the Gods; and what Homer writes concerning Ephialtus and Otus, that they sought to ascend heaven and dethrone the Gods, in reality relates to this primitive people. Jupiter and the other Gods debated what was to be done in this emergency. For neither could they prevail on themselves to destroy them, as they had the giants, with thunder, so that the race should be abolished; for in that case they would be deprived of the honours of the sacrifices which they were in the custom of receiving from them; nor could they permit a continuance of their insolence and impiety. Jupiter, with some difficulty having desired silence, at length spoke. 'I think,' said he, 'I have contrived a method by which we may, by rendering the human race more feeble, quell the insolence which they exercise, without proceeding to their utter destruction. I will cut each of them in half; and so they will at once

be weaker and more useful on account of their numbers. They shall walk upright on two legs. If they show any more insolence, and will not keep quiet, I will cut them up in half again, so they shall go about hopping on one leg.'

"So saying, he cut human beings in half, as people cut eggs before they salt them, or as I have seen eggs cut with hairs. He ordered Apollo to take each one as he cut him, and turn his face and half his neck towards the operation, so that by contemplating it he might become more cautious and humble; and then, to cure him, Apollo turned the face round, and drawing the skin upon what we now call the belly, like a contracted pouch, and leaving one opening, that which is called the navel, tied it in the middle. He then smoothed many other wrinkles, and moulded the breast 191
with much such an instrument as the leather-cutters use to smooth the skins upon the block. He left only a few wrinkles in the belly, near the navel, to serve as a record of its former adventure. Immediately after this division, as each desired to possess the other half of himself, these divided people threw their arms around and embraced each other, seeking to grow together; and from this resolution to do nothing without the other half, they died of hunger and weakness: when one half died and the other was left alive, that which was thus left sought the other and folded it to its bosom; whether that half were an entire woman (for we now call it a woman) or a man; and thus they perished. But Jupiter, pitying them, thought of another contrivance. In this manner is generation now produced, by the union of male and female; so that from the embrace of a man and woman the race is propagated.

"From this period, mutual love has naturally existed between human beings; that reconciler and bond of union of their original nature, which seeks to make two one, and to heal the divided nature of man. Every one of us is thus the half of what may be properly termed a man, and like a [flatfish] cut in two, is the imperfect portion of an entire whole, perpetually necessitated to seek the half belonging to him.

192 "Such as I have described is ever an affectionate lover and a faithful friend, delighting in that which is in conformity with his own nature. Whenever, therefore, any such as I have described are impetuously struck, through the sentiment of their former union, with love and desire and the want of community, they are unwilling to be divided even for a moment. These are they who devote their whole lives to each other, with a vain and inexpressible longing to obtain from each other something they know not what; for it is not merely the sensual delights of their intercourse for the sake of which they dedicate themselves to each other with such serious affection; but the soul of each manifestly thirsts for, from the other, something which there are no words to describe, and divines that which it seeks, and traces obscurely the footsteps of its obscure desire. If Vulcan should say to persons thus affected, 'My good people, what is it that you want with one another?' And if, while they were hesitating what to answer, he should proceed to ask, 'Do you not desire the closest union and singleness to exist between you, so that you may never be divided night or day? If so, I will melt you together, and make you grow into one, so that both in life and death ye may be undivided. Consider, is this what you desire? Will it content you if you become that which I propose?' We all know that no one would refuse such an offer, but would at once feel that this was what he had ever sought; and intimately to mix and melt and to be melted together with his beloved, so that one should be made out of two.

"The cause of this desire is, that according to our original nature, we were once entire. The desire and
193 the pursuit of integrity and union is that which we all love. First, as I said, we were entire, but now we have been dwindled through our own weakness, as the Arcadians by the Lacedæmonians. There is reason to fear, if we are guilty of any additional impiety towards the Gods, that we may be cut in two again, and may go about like those figures painted on the columns, divided through the middle of our nostrils, as thin as lispæ. On which account every man ought to be exhorted to

pay due reverence to the Gods, that we may escape so severe a punishment, and obtain those things which Love, our general and commander, incites us to desire; against whom let none rebel by exciting the hatred of the Gods. For if we continue on good terms with them, we may discover and possess those lost and concealed objects of our love; a good-fortune which now befalls to few.

"I assert, then, that the happiness of all, both men and women, consists singly in the fulfilment of their love, and in that possession of its objects by which we are in some degree restored to our ancient nature. If this be the completion of felicity, that must necessarily approach nearest to it, in which we obtain the possession and society of those whose natures most intimately accord with our own. And if we would celebrate any God as the author of this benefit, we should justly celebrate Love with hymns of joy; who, in our present condition, brings good assistance in our necessity, and affords great hopes, if we persevere in piety towards the Gods, that he will restore us to our original state, and confer on us the complete happiness alone suited to our nature.

"Such, Eryximachus, is my discourse on the subject of Love; different indeed from yours, which I nevertheless entreat you not to turn into ridicule, that we may not interrupt what each has separately to deliver on the subject."

"I will refrain at present," said Eryximachus, "for your discourse delighted me. And if I did not know that Socrates and Agathon were profoundly versed in the science of love affairs, I should fear that they had nothing new to say, after so many and such various imaginations. As it is, I confide in the fertility of their geniuses."—"Your part of the contest, at least, was strenuously fought, Eryximachus," said Socrates, "but 194
if you had been in the situation in which I am, or rather shall be, after the discourse of Agathon, like me, you would then have reason to fear, and be reduced to your wits' end."—"Socrates," said Agathon, "wishes to confuse me with the enchantments of his wit, sufficiently

confused already with the expectation I see in the assembly in favour of my discourse."—"I must have lost my memory, Agathon," replied Socrates, "if I imagine that you could be disturbed by a few private persons, after having witnessed your firmness and courage in ascending the rostrum with the actors, and in calmly reciting your compositions in the presence of so great an assembly as that which decreed you the prize of tragedy."—"What then, Socrates," retorted Agathon, "do you think me so full of the theatre as to be ignorant that the judgment of a few wise is more awful than that of a multitude of others, to one who rightly balances the value of their suffrages?"—"I should judge ill indeed, Agathon," answered Socrates, "in thinking you capable of any rude and unrefined conception, for I well know that if you meet with any whom you consider wise, you esteem such alone of more value than all others. But we are far from being entitled to this distinction, for we were also of that assembly, and to be numbered among the rest. But should you meet with any who are really wise, you would be careful to say nothing in their presence which you thought they would not approve—is it not so?"—"Certainly," replied Agathon.—"You would not then exercise the same caution in the presence of the multitude in which they were included?"—"My dear Agathon," said Phædrus, interrupting him, "if you answer all the questions of Socrates, they will never have an end; he will urge them without conscience so long as he can get any person, especially one who is so beautiful, to dispute with him. I own it delights me to hear Socrates discuss; but at present, I must see that Love is not defrauded of the praise, which it is my province to exact from each of you. Pay the God his due, and then reason between yourselves if you will."

"Your admonition is just, Phædrus," replied Agathon, "nor need any reasoning I hold with Socrates impede me: we shall find many future opportunities for discussion. I will begin my discourse then; first having defined what ought to be the subject of it. All who have already spoken seem to me not so much to

have praised Love, as to have felicitated mankind on the many advantages of which that deity is the cause; what he is, the author of these great benefits, none have yet declared. There is one mode alone of celebra- 195
tion which would comprehend the whole topic, namely, first to declare what are those benefits, and then what he is who is the author of those benefits, which are the subject of our discourse. Love ought first to be praised, and then his gifts declared. I assert, then, that although all the Gods are immortally happy, Love, if I dare trust my voice to express so awful a truth, is the happiest, and most excellent, and the most beautiful. That he is the most beautiful is evident; first, O Phædrus, from this circumstance, that he is the youngest of the Gods; and, secondly, from his fleetness, and from his repugnance to all that is old; for he escapes with the swiftness of wings from old age; a thing in itself sufficiently swift, since it overtakes us sooner than there is need; and which Love, who delights in the intercourse of the young, hates, and in no manner can be induced to enter into community with. The ancient proverb, which says that like is attracted by like, applies to the attributes of Love. I concede many things to you, O Phædrus, but this I do not concede, that Love is more ancient than Saturn and Jupiter. I assert that he is not only the youngest of the Gods, but invested with everlasting youth. Those ancient deeds among the Gods resorded by Hesiod and Parmenides, if their relations are to be considered as true, were produced not by Love, but by Necessity. For if Love had been then in Heaven, those violent and sanguinary crimes never would have taken place; but there would ever have subsisted that affection and peace, in which the Gods now live, under the influence of Love.

"He is young, therefore, and being young is tender and soft. There were need of some poet like Homer to celebrate the delicacy and tenderness of Love. For Homer says, that the goddess Calamity is delicate, and that her feet are tender. 'Her feet are soft,' he says, 'for she treads not upon the ground, but makes her path upon the heads of men.' He gives as an evidence of

her tenderness, that she walks not upon that which is hard, but that which is soft. The same evidence is sufficient to make manifest the tenderness of Love. For Love walks not upon the earth, nor over the heads of men, which are not indeed very soft; but he dwells within, and treads on the softest of existing things, having established his habitation within the souls and inmost nature of Gods and men; not indeed in all souls —for wherever he chances to find a hard and rugged disposition, there he will not inhabit, but only where it is most soft and tender. Of needs must he be the most delicate of all things, who touches lightly with his feet only the softest parts of those things which are the softest of all.

196 "He is then the youngest and the most delicate of all divinities; and in addition to this, he is, as it were, the most moist and liquid. For if he were otherwise, he could not, as he does, fold himself around everything, and secretly flow out and into every soul. His loveliness, that which Love possesses far beyond all other things, is a manifestation of the liquid and flowing symmetry of his form; for between deformity and Love there is eternal contrast and repugnance. His life is spent among flowers, and this accounts for the immortal fairness of his skin; for the winged Love rests not in his flight on any form, or within any soul the flower of whose loveliness is faded, but there remains most willingly where is the odour and radiance of blossoms, yet unwithered. Concerning the beauty of the God, let this be sufficient, though many things must remain unsaid. Let us next consider the virtue and power of Love.

"What is most admirable in Love is, that he neither inflicts nor endures injury in his relations either with Gods or men. Nor if he suffers any thing does he suffer it through violence, nor doing any thing does he act it with violence, for Love is never even touched with violence. Every one willingly administers every thing to Love; and that which every one voluntarily concedes to another, the laws, which are the kings of the republic, decree that is just for him to possess. In addition to

justice, Love participates in the highest temperance; for if temperance is defined to be the being superior to and holding under dominion pleasures and desires; then Love, than whom no pleasure is more powerful, and who is thus more powerful than all persuasions and delights, must be excellently temperate. In power and valour Mars cannot contend with Love: the love of Venus possesses Mars; the possessor is always superior to the possessed, and he who subdues the most powerful must of necessity be the most powerful of all.

"The justice and temperance and valour of the God have been thus declared;—there remains to exhibit his wisdom. And first, that, like Eryximachus, I may honour my own profession, the God is a wise poet; so wise that he can even make a poet one who was not before: for every one, even if before he were ever so undisciplined, becomes a poet as soon as he is touched by Love;—a sufficient proof that Love is a great poet, and well skilled in that science according to the discipline of music. For what any one possesses not, or knows not, that can he neither give nor teach another. And who will deny that the divine poetry, 197
by which all living things are produced upon the earth, is not harmonised by the wisdom of Love? Is it not evident that Love was the author of all the arts of life with which we are acquainted, and that he whose teacher has been Love, becomes eminent and illustrious, whilst he who knows not Love, remains forever unregarded and obscure? Apollo invented medicine, and divination, and archery, under the guidance of desire and Love; so that Apollo was the disciple of Love. Through him the Muses discovered the arts of literature, and Vulcan that of moulding brass, and Minerva the loom, and Jupiter the mystery of the dominion which he now exercises over gods and men. So were the Gods taught and disciplined by the love of that which is beautiful; for there is no love towards deformity.

"At the origin of things, as I have before said, many fearful deeds are reported to have been done among the Gods, on account of the dominion of Necessity. But so soon as this deity sprang forth from the desire which

forever tends in the universe towards that which is lovely, then all blessings descended upon all living things, human and divine. Love seems to me, O Phædrus, a divinity the most beautiful and the best of all, and the author to all others of the excellencies with which his own nature is endowed. Nor can I restrain the poetic enthusiasm which takes possession of my discourse, and bids me declare that Love is the divinity who creates peace among men, and calm upon the sea, the windless silence of storms, repose and sleep in sadness. Love divests us of all alienation from each other, and fills our vacant hearts with overflowing sympathy; he gathers us together in such social meetings as we now delight to celebrate, our guardian and our guide in dances, and sacrifices, and feasts. Yes, Love, who showers benignity upon the world, and before whose presence all harsh passions flee and perish; the author of all soft affections; the destroyer of all ungentle thoughts; merciful, mild; the object of the admiration of the wise, and the delight of gods; possessed by the fortunate, and desired by the unhappy, therefore unhappy because they possess him not; the father of grace, and delicacy, and gentleness, and delight, and persuasion, and desire; the cherisher of all that is good, the abolisher of all evil; our most excellent pilot, defence, saviour and guardian in labour and in fear, in desire and in reason; the ornament and governor of all things human and divine; the best, the loveliest; in whose footsteps every one ought to follow, celebrating him excellently in song, and bearing each his part in that divinest harmony which Love sings to all things which live and are, soothing the troubled minds of Gods and men. This, O Phædrus, is what I have to offer in praise of the divinity; partly composed, indeed, of thoughtless and playful fancies, and partly of such serious ones as I could well command."

198 No sooner had Agathon ceased, than a loud murmur of applause arose from all present; so becomingly had the fair youth spoken, both in praise of the God, and in extenuation of himself. Then Socrates, addressing Eryximachus, said, "Was not my fear reasonable, son

of Acumenus? Did I not divine what has, in fact, happened,—that Agathon's discourse would be so wonderfully beautiful, as to preoccupy all interest in what I should say?"—"You, indeed, divined well so far, O Socrates," said Eryximachus, "that Agathon would speak eloquently, but not that, therefore, you would be reduced to any difficulty."—"How, my good friend, can I or any once else be otherwise than reduced to difficulty, who speak after a discourse so various and so eloquent, and which otherwise had been sufficiently wonderful, if, at the conclusion, the splendour of the sentences, and the choice selection of the expressions, had not struck all the hearers with astonishment; so that I, who well know that I can never say anything nearly so beautiful as this, would, if there had been any escape, have run away for shame. The story of Gorgias came into my mind, and I was afraid lest in reality I should suffer what Homer describes; and lest Agathon, scanning my discourse with the head of the eloquent Gorgias,* should turn me to stone for speechlessness. I immediately perceived how ridiculously I had engaged myself with you to assume a part in rendering praise to love, and had boasted that I was well skilled in amatory matters, being so ignorant of the manner in which it is becoming to render him honour, as I now perceive myself to be. I, in my simplicity, imagined that the truth ought to be spoken concerning each of the topics of our praise, and that it would be sufficient, choosing those which are the most honourable to the God, to place them in as luminous an arrangement as we could. I had, therefore, great hopes that I should speak satisfactorily, being well aware that I was acquainted with the true foundations of the praise which we have engaged to render. But since, as it appears, our purpose has been, not to render Love his due honour, but to accumulate the most beautiful and the greatest attributes of his divinity, whether they in truth belong to it or not, and that the proposed question is not how Love ought to be praised, but how we should praise him most eloquently, my attempt must of necessity fail. It is on this account, I imagine, that in

*& and Protagoras

your discourses you have attributed everything to Love, and have described him to be the author of such and so
199 great effects as, to those who are ignorant of his true nature, may exhibit him as the most beautiful and the best of all things. Not, indeed, to those who know the truth. Such praise has a splendid and imposing effect, but as I am unacquainted with the art of rendering it, my mind, which could not foresee what would be required of me, absolves me from that which my tongue promised. Farewell, then, for such praise I can never render.

"But if you desire, I will speak what I feel to be true; and that I may not expose myself to ridicule, I entreat you to consider that I speak without entering into competition with those who have preceded me. Consider, then, Phædrus, whether you will exact from me such a discourse, containing the mere truth with respect to Love, and composed of such unpremeditated expressions as may chance to offer themselves to my mind."—Phædrus and the rest bade him speak in the manner which he judged most befitting.—"Permit me, then, O Phædrus, to ask Agathon a few questions, so that, confirmed by his agreement with me, I may proceed."—"Willingly," replied Phædrus, "ask."—Then Socrates thus began:—

"I applaud, dear Agathon, the beginning of your discourse, where you say we ought first to define and declare what Love is, and then his works. This rule I particularly approve. But, come, since you have given us a discourse of such beauty and majesty concerning Love, you are able, I doubt not, to explain this question, whether Love is the love of something or nothing? I do not ask you of what parents Love is; for the inquiry, of whether Love is the love of any father or mother, would be sufficiently ridiculous. But if I were asking you to describe that which a father is, I should ask, not whether a father was the love of any one, but whether a father was the father of any one or not; you would undoubtedly reply, that a father was the father of a son or daughter; would you not?"—"Assuredly."—"You would define a mother in the same

manner?"—"Without doubt."—"Yet bear with me, and answer a few more questions, for I would learn from you that which I wish to know. If I should inquire, in addition, is not a brother, through the very nature of his relation, the brother of some one?"—"Certainly."—"Of a brother or sister, is he not?"—"Without question."—"Try to explain to me then the nature of Love; Love is the love of something or nothing?"—"Of something, certainly."

"Observe and remember this concession. Tell me yet farther, whether Love desires that of which it is the Love or not?"—"It desires it, assuredly."—"Whether possessing that which it desires and loves, or not possessing it, does it desire and love?"—"Not possessing it, I should imagine."—"Observe now, whether it does not appear, that, of necessity, desire desires that which it wants and does not possess, and no longer desires that which it no longer wants: this appears to me, Agathon, of necessity to be; how does it appear to you?"—"It appears so to me also."—"Would any one who was already illustrious, desire to be illustrious; would any one already strong, desire to be strong? From what has already been conceded, it follows that he would not. If any one already strong, should desire to be strong; or any one already swift, should desire to be swift; or any one already healthy, should desire to be healthy, it must be concluded that they still desired the advantages of which they already seemed possessed. To destroy the foundation of this error, observe, Agathon, that each of these persons must possess the several advantages in question, at the moment present to our thoughts, whether he will or no. And, now, is it possible that those advantages should be at that time the objects of his desire? For, if any one should say, being in health, 'I desire to be in health;' being rich, 'I desire to be rich, and thus still desire those things which I already possess;' we might say to him, 'You, my friend, possess health, and strength, and riches; you do not desire to possess now, but to continue to possess them in future; for, whether you will or no, they now belong to you. Consider then, whether, when 200

you say that you desire things present to you, and in your own possession, you say anything else than that you desire the advantages to be for the future also in your possession.' What else could he reply?"—"Nothing, indeed."—"Is not Love, then, the love of that which is not within its reach, and which cannot hold in security, for the future, those things of which it obtains a present and transitory possession?"—"Evidently."—"Love, therefore, and everything else that desires anything, desires that which is absent and beyond his reach, that which it has not, that which is not itself, that which it wants; such are the things of which there are desire and love?"—"Assuredly."

"Come," said Socrates, "let us review your concessions. Is Love anything else than the love first of something; and, secondly, of those things of which it
201 has need?"—"Nothing."—"Now, remember of those things you said in your discourse, that Love was the love—if you wish I will remind you. I think you said something of this kind, that all the affairs of the Gods were admirably disposed through the love of the things which are beautiful; for, there was no love of things deformed; did you not say so?"—"I confess that I did."—"You said what was most likely to be true, my friend; and if the matter be so, the love of beauty must be one thing, and the love of deformity another."—"Certainly."—"It is conceded, then, that Love loves that which he wants but possesses not?"—"Yes, certainly."—"But Love wants and does not possess beauty?"—"Indeed it must necessarily follow."—"What, then! call you that beautiful which has need of beauty and possesses not?"—"Assuredly no."—"Do you still assert, then, that Love is beautiful, if all that we have said be true?"—"Indeed, Socrates," said Agathon, "I am in danger of being convicted of ignorance, with respect to all that I then spoke."—"You spoke most eloquently, my dear Agathon; but bear with my questions yet a moment. You admit that things which are good are also beautiful?"—"No doubt."—"If Love, then, be in want of beautiful things, and things which are good are beautiful, he must be

in want of things which are good?"—"I cannot refute your arguments, Socrates."—"You cannot refute truth, my dear Agathon: to refute Socrates is nothing difficult.

"But I will dismiss these questionings. At present let me endeavour, to the best of my power, to repeat to you, on the basis of the points which have been agreed upon between me and Agathon, a discourse concerning Love, which I formerly heard from the prophetess Diotima, who was profoundly skilled in this and many other doctrines, and who, ten years before the pestilence, procured to the Athenians, through their sacrifices, a delay of the disease; for it was she who taught me the science of things relating to Love.

"As you well remarked, Agathon, we ought to declare who and what is Love, and then his works. It is easiest to relate them in the same order as the foreign prophetess observed when, questioning me, she related them. For I said to her much the same things that Agathon has just said to me—that Love was a great deity, and that he was beautiful; and she refuted me with the same reasons as I have employed to refute Agathon, compelling me to infer that he was neither beautiful nor good, as I said.—'What then,' I objected, 'O Diotima, is Love ugly and evil?'—'Good words, I entreat you,' said Diotima; 'do you think that every thing which is not beautiful, must of necessity be ugly?'—'Certainly.'—'And everything that is not wise, 202
ignorant? Do you not perceive that there is something between ignorance and wisdom?'—'What is that?'—'To have a right opinion or conjecture. Observe, that this kind of opinion, for which no reason can be rendered, cannot be called knowledge; for how can that be called knowledge, which is without evidence or reason? Nor ignorance, on the other hand; for how can that be called ignorance which arrives at the persuasion of that which it really is? A right opinion is something between understanding and ignorance.'—I confessed that what she alleged was true.—'Do not then say,' she continued, 'that what is not beautiful is of necessity deformed, nor what is not good is of necessity evil; nor, since you have confessed that Love is neither

beautiful nor good, infer, therefore, that he is deformed or evil, but rather something intermediate.'

"'But,' I said, 'love is confessed by all to be a great God.'—'Do you mean, when you say all, all those who know, or those who know not, what they say?'—'All collectively.'—'And how can that be, Socrates?' said she laughing; 'how can he be acknowledged to be a great God, by those who assert that he is not even a God at all?'—'And who are they?' I said—'You for one, and I for another.'—'How can you say that, Diotima?'—'Easily,' she replied, 'and with truth; for tell me, do you not own that all the Gods are beautiful and happy? or will you presume to maintain that any God is otherwise?'—'By Jupiter, not I!'—'Do you not call those alone happy who possess all things that are beautiful and good?'—'Certainly.'—'You have confessed that Love, through his desire for things beautiful and good, possesses not those materials of happiness.'—'Indeed such was my concession.'—'But how can we conceive a God to be without the possession of what is beautiful and good?'—'In no manner, I confess.'—'Observe, then, that you do not consider Love to be a God.'—'What, then,' I said, 'is Love a mortal?'—'By no means.'—'But what, then?'—'Like those things which I have before instanced, he is neither mortal nor immortal, but something intermediate.'—'What is that, O Diotima?'—'A great dæmon, Socrates; and everything dæmoniacal holds an intermediate place between what is divine and what is mortal.'

"'What is his power and nature?' I inquired.—'He interprets and makes a communication between divine and human things, conveying the prayers and sacrifices of men to the Gods, and communicating the commands and directions concerning the mode of worship most pleasing to them, from Gods to men. He fills up that intermediate space between these two classes of beings, so as to bind together, by his own power, the whole universe of things. Through him subsist all divination, and the science of sacred things as it relates to sacrifices, and expiations, and disenchantments, and

prophecy, and magic. The divine nature cannot im- 203
mediately communicate with what is human, but all that intercourse and converse which is conceded by the Gods to men, both whilst they sleep and when they wake, subsists through the intervention of Love; and he who is wise in the science of this intercourse is supremely happy, and participates in the dæmoniacal nature; whilst he who is wise in any other science or art, remains a mere ordinary slave. These dæmons are, indeed, many and various, and one of them is Love.'

"'Who are the parents of Love?' I inquired.—'The history of what you ask,' replied Diotima, 'is somewhat long; nevertheless I will explain it to you. On the birth of Venus the Gods celebrated a great feast, and among them came Plenty, the son of Metis. After supper, Poverty, observing the profusion, came to beg, and stood beside the door. Plenty being drunk with nectar, for wine was not yet invented, went out into Jupiter's garden, and fell into a deep sleep. Poverty wishing to have a child by Plenty, on account of her low estate, lay down by him, and from his embraces conceived Love. Love is, therefore, the follower and servant of Venus, because he was conceived at her birth, and because by nature he is a lover of all that is beautiful, and Venus was beautiful. And since Love is the child of Poverty and Plenty, his nature and fortune participate in that of his parents. He is for ever poor, and so far from being delicate and beautiful, as mankind imagine, he is squalid and withered; he flies low along the ground, and is homeless and unsandalled; he sleeps without covering before the doors, and in the unsheltered streets; possessing thus far his mother's nature, that he is ever the companion of want. But, inasmuch as he participates in that of his father, he is for ever scheming to obtain things which are good and beautiful; he is fearless, vehement, and strong; a dreadful hunter, for ever weaving some new contrivance; exceedingly cautious and prudent, and full of resources; he is also, during his whole existence, a philosopher, a powerful enchanter, a wizard, and a subtle sophist. And, as his nature is neither mortal nor immortal, on

the same day when he is fortunate and successful, he will at one time flourish, and then die away, and then, according to his father's nature, again revive. All that he acquires perpetually flows away from him, so that Love is never either rich or poor, and holding for ever an intermediate state between ignorance and wisdom.
204 The case stands thus;—no God philosophises or desires to become wise, for he is wise; nor, if there exist any other being who is wise, does he philosophise. Nor do the ignorant philosophise, for they desire not to become wise; for this is the evil of ignorance, that he who has neither intelligence, nor virtue, nor delicacy of sentiment, imagines that he possesses all those things sufficiently. He seeks not, therefore, that possession, of whose want he is not aware.'—'Who, then, O Diotima,' I inquired, 'are philosophers, if they are neither the ignorant nor the wise?'—'It is evident, even to a child, that they are those intermediate persons, among whom is Love. For Wisdom is one of the most beautiful of all things; Love is that which thirsts for the beautiful, so that Love is of necessity a philosopher, philosophy being an intermediate state between ignorance and wisdom. His parentage accounts for his condition, being the child of a wise and well provided father, and of a mother both ignorant and poor.

"'Such is the dæmoniacal nature, my dear Socrates; nor do I wonder at your error concerning Love, for you thought, as I conjecture from what you say, that Love was not the lover but the beloved, and thence, well concluded that he must be supremely beautiful; for that which is the object of Love must indeed be fair, and delicate, and perfect, and most happy; but Love inherits, as I have declared, a totally opposite nature.'—'Your words have persuasion in them, O stranger,' I said; 'be it as you say. But this Love, what advantages does he afford to men?'—'I will proceed to explain it to you, Socrates. Love being such and so produced as I have described, is, indeed, as you say, the love of things which are beautiful. But if any one should ask us, saying: O Socrates and Diotima, why is Love the love of beautiful things? Or, in plainer

words, what does the lover of that which is beautiful, love in the object of his love, and seek from it?'—'He seeks,' I said, interrupting her, 'the property and possession of it.'—'But that,' she replied, 'might still be met with another question, What has he, who possesses that which is beautiful?'—'Indeed, I cannot immediately reply.'—'But, if changing the beautiful for good, any one should inquire,—I ask, O Socrates, what is that which he who loves that which is good, loves in the object of his love?'—'To be in his possession,' I replied.—'And what has he, who has the possession of good?'—'This question is of easier solution, he is happy.'—'Those who are happy, then, are happy 205
through the possession; and it is useless to inquire what he desires, who desires to be happy; the question seems to have a complete reply. But do you think that this wish and this love are common to all men, and that all desire that that which is good should be for ever present to them?'—'Certainly, common to all.'—'Why do we not say then, Socrates, that every one loves? if, indeed, all love perpetually the same thing? But we say that some love, and some do not.'—'Indeed I wonder why it is so.'—'Wonder not,' said Diotima, 'for we select a particular species of love, and apply to it distinctively, the appellation of that which is universal.'——

"'Give me an example of such a select application.'—'Poetry; which is a general name signifying every cause whereby anything proceeds from that which is not, into that which is; so that the exercise of every inventive art is poetry, and all such artists poets. Yet they are not called poets, but distinguished by other names; and one portion or species of poetry, that which has relation to music and rhythm, is divided from all others, and known by the name belonging to all. For this is alone properly called poetry, and those who exercise the art of this species of poetry, poets. So with respect to Love. Love is indeed universally all that earnest desire for the possession of happiness and that which is good; the greatest and the subtlest love, and which inhabits the heart of every living being; but those who seek this object through the acquirement of wealth, or the exercise of the gymnastic arts, or philosophy,

are not said to love, nor are called lovers; one species alone is called love, and those alone are said to be lovers, and to love, who seek the attainment of the universal desire through one species of love, which is peculiarly distinguished by the name belonging to the whole. It is asserted by some, that they love, who are seeking the lost half of their divided being. But I assert, that Love is neither the love of half nor of the whole, unless, my friend, it meets with that which is good; since men willingly cut off their own hands and feet, if they think that they are the cause of evil to them. Nor do they cherish and embrace that which may belong to themselves, merely because it is their own; unless, indeed, any one should choose to say, that that which is good is attached to his own nature and is his own, whilst
206 that which is evil is foreign and accidental; but love nothing but that which is good. Does it not appear so to you?'—'Assuredly.'—'Can we then simply affirm that men love that which is good?'—'Without doubt.'—'What, then, must we not add, that, in addition to loving that which is good, they love that it should be present to themselves?'—'Indeed that must be added.'—'And not merely that it should be present, but that it should ever be present?'—'This also must be added.'

"'Love, then, is collectively the desire in men that good should be for ever present to them.'—'Most true.'—'Since this is the general definition of Love, can you explain in what mode of attaining its object, and in what species of actions, does Love peculiarly consist?'—'If I knew what you ask, O Diotima, I should not have so much wondered at your wisdom, nor have sought you out for the purpose of deriving improvement from your instructions.'—'I will tell you,' she replied: 'Love is the desire of generation in the beautiful, both with relation to the body and the soul.'—'I must be a diviner to comprehend what you say, for, being such as I am, I confess that I do not understand it.'—'But I will explain it more clearly. The bodies and the souls of all human beings are alike pregnant with their future progeny, and when we arrive at a certain age, our nature impels us to bring forth and propagate. This nature is

unable to produce in that which is deformed, but it can produce in that which is beautiful. The intercourse of the male and female in generation, a divine work, through pregnancy and production, is, as it were, something immortal in mortality. These things cannot take place in that which is incongruous; for that which is deformed is incongruous, but that which is beautiful is congruous with what is mortal and divine. Beauty is, therefore, the fate, and the Juno Lucina to generation. Wherefore, whenever that which is pregnant with the generative principle, approaches that which is beautiful, it becomes transported with delight, and is poured forth in overflowing pleasure, and propagates. But when it approaches that which is deformed it is contracted by sadness, and being repelled and checked, it does not produce, but retains unwillingly that with which it is pregnant. Wherefore, to one pregnant, and, as it were, already bursting with the load of his desire, the impulse towards that which is beautiful is intense, on account of the great pain of retaining that which he has conceived. Love, then, O Socrates, is not as you imagine the love of the beautiful.'—'What, then?'—'Of generation and production in the beautiful.'—'Why then of generation?'—'Generation is something eternal and immortal in mortality. It necessarily, from what has been confessed, follows, that we must desire immortality to- 207
gether with what is good, since Love is the desire that good be for ever present to us. Of necessity Love must also be the desire of immortality.'

"Diotima taught me all this doctrine in the discourse we had together concerning Love; and, in addition, she inquired, 'What do you think, Socrates, is the cause of this love and desire? Do you not perceive how all animals, both those of the earth and of the air, are affected when they desire the propagation of their species, affected even to weakness and disease by the impulse of their love; first, longing to be mixed with each other, and then seeking nourishment for their offspring, so that the feeblest are ready to contend with the strongest in obedience to this law, and to die for the sake of their young, or to waste away with hunger, and

do or suffer anything so that they may not want nourishment. It might be said that human beings do these things through reason, but can you explain why other animals are thus affected through love? '—I confessed that I did not know.—' Do you imagine yourself,' said she, ' to be skilful in the science of Love, if you are ignorant of these things? '—' As I said before, O Diotima, I come to you, well knowing how much I am in need of a teacher. But explain to me, I entreat you, the cause of these things, and of the other things relating to Love.'—' If,' said Diotima, ' you believe that Love is of the same nature as we have mutually agreed upon, wonder not that such are its effects. For the mortal nature seeks, so far as it is able, to become deathless and eternal. But it can only accomplish this desire by generation, which for ever leaves another new in place of the old. For, although each human being be severally said to live, and be the same from youth to old age, yet, that which is called the same, never contains within itself the same things, but always is becoming new by the loss and change of that which it possessed before; both the hair and the flesh, and the bones, and the entire body.

"' And not only does this change take place in the body, but also with respect to the soul. Manners, morals, opinions, desires, pleasures, sorrows, fears; none of these ever remain unchanged in the same persons; but some die away, and others are produced. And, what is yet more strange is, that not only does some knowledge spring up, and another decay, and that
208 we are never the same with respect to our knowledge, but that each several object of our thoughts suffers the same revolution. That which is called meditation, or the exercise of memory, is the science of the escape or departure of memory; for, forgetfulness is the going out of knowledge; and meditation, calling up a new memory in the place of that which has departed, preserves knowledge; so that, though for ever displaced and restored, it seems to be the same. In this manner every thing mortal is preserved: not that it is constant and eternal, like that which is divine; but that in the

place of what has grown old and is departed, it leaves another new like that which it was itself. By this contrivance, O Socrates, does what is mortal, the body and all other things, partake of immortality; that which is immortal, is immortal in another manner. Wonder not, then, if every thing by nature cherishes that which was produced from itself, for this earnest Love is a tendency towards eternity.'

"Having heard this discourse, I was astonished, and asked, 'Can these things be true, O wisest Diotima?' And she, like an accomplished sophist, said, 'Know well, O Socrates, that if you only regard that love of glory which inspires men, you will wonder at your own unskilfulness in not having discovered all that I now declare. Observe with how vehement a desire they are affected to become illustrious and to prolong their glory into immortal time, to attain which object, far more ardently than for the sake of their children, all men are ready to engage in many dangers, and expend their fortunes, and submit to any labours and incur any death. Do you believe that Alcestis would have died in the place of Admetus, or Achilles for the revenge of Patroclus, or Codrus for the kingdom of his posterity, if they had not believed that the immortal memory of their actions, which we now cherish, would have remained after their death? Far otherwise; all such deeds are done for the sake of ever-living virtue, and this immortal glory which they have obtained; and inasmuch as any one is of an excellent nature, so much the more is he impelled to attain this reward. For they love what is immortal.

"'Those whose bodies alone are pregnant with this principle of immortality are attracted by women, seeking through the production of children what they imagine to be happiness and immortality and an enduring remembrance; but they whose souls are far more pregnant 209
than their bodies, conceive and produce that which is more suitable to the soul. What is suitable to the soul? Intelligence, and every other power and excellence of the mind; of which all poets, and all other artists who are creative and inventive, are the authors. The

greatest and most admirable wisdom is that which regulates the government of families and states, and which is called moderation and justice. Whosoever, therefore, from his youth feels his soul pregnant with the conception of these excellences, is divine; and when due time arrives, desires to bring forth; and wandering about, he seeks the beautiful in which he may propagate what he has conceived; for there is no generation in that which is deformed; he embraces those bodies which are beautiful rather than those which are deformed, in obedience to the principle which is within him, which is ever seeking to perpetuate itself. And if he meets, in conjunction with loveliness of form, a beautiful, generous, and gentle soul, he embraces both at once, and immediately undertakes to educate this object of his love, and is inspired with an overflowing persuasion to declare what is virtue, and what he ought to be who would attain to its possession, and what are the duties which it exacts. For, by the intercourse with, and as it were, the very touch of that which is beautiful, he brings forth and produces what he had formerly conceived; and nourishes and educates that which is thus produced together with the object of his love, whose image, whether absent or present, is never divided from his mind. So that those who are thus united are linked by a nobler community and a firmer love, as being the common parents of a lovelier and more endearing progeny than the parents of other children. And every one who considers what posterity Homer and Hesiod, and the other great poets, have left behind them, the sources of their own immortal memory and renown, or what children of his soul Lycurgus* has appointed to be the guardians, not only of Lacedæmon, but of all Greece; or what an illustrious progeny of laws * Solon has produced, and how many admirable achievements, both among the Greeks and Barbarians, men have left as the pledges of that love which subsisted between them and the beautiful, would choose rather to be the parent of such children than those in a human shape. For divine honours have often been rendered to them on account of such children, but on account of those in human shape, never.

*S, 640–560 B

L, legendary Spartan legislator; Athenian politician

"'Your own meditation, O Socrates, might perhaps have initiated you in all these things which I have 210
already taught you on the subject of Love. But those perfect and sublime ends to which these are only the means, I know not that you would have been competent to discover. I will declare them, therefore, and will render them as intelligible as possible: do you meanwhile strain all your attention to trace the obscure depth of the subject. He who aspires to love rightly, ought from his earliest youth to seek an intercourse with beautiful forms, and first to make a single form the object of his love, and therein to generate intellectual excellences. He ought, then, to consider that beauty in whatever form it resides is the brother of that beauty which subsists in another form; and if he ought to pursue that which is beautiful in form, it would be absurd to imagine that beauty is not one and the same thing in all forms, and would therefore remit much of his ardent preference towards one, through his perception of the multitude of claims upon his love. In addition, he would consider the beauty which is in souls more excellent than that which is in form. So that one endowed with an admirable soul, even though the flower of the form were withered, would suffice him as the object of his love and care, and the companion with whom he might seek and produce such conclusions as tend to the improvement of youth; so that it might be led to observe the beauty and the conformity which there is in the observation of its duties and the laws, and to esteem little the mere beauty of the outward form. He would then conduct his pupil to science, so that he might look upon the loveliness of wisdom; and that contemplating thus the universal beauty, no longer would he unworthily and meanly enslave himself to the attractions of one form in love, nor one subject of discipline or science, but would turn towards the wide ocean of intellectual beauty, and from the sight of the lovely and majestic forms which it contains, would abundantly bring forth his conceptions in philosophy; until, strengthened and confirmed, he should at length steadily contemplate one science, which is the science of this universal beauty.

"'Attempt, I entreat you, to mark what I say with as keen an observation as you can. He who has been disciplined to this point in Love, by contemplating beautiful objects gradually, and in their order, now arriving at the end of all that concerns Love, on a sudden beholds a beauty wonderful in its nature. This is it, O Socrates, for the sake of which all the former
211 labours were endured. It is eternal, unproduced, indestructible; neither subject to increase nor decay: not, like other things, partly beautiful and partly deformed; not at one time beautiful and at another time not; not beautiful in relation to one thing and deformed in relation to another; not here beautiful and there deformed; not beautiful in the estimation of one person and deformed in that of another; nor can this supreme beauty be figured to the imagination like a beautiful face, or beautiful hands, or any portion of the body, nor like any discourse, nor any science. Nor does it subsist in any other that lives or is, either in earth, or in heaven, or in any other place; but it is eternally uniform and consistent, and monoeidic with itself. All other things are beautiful through a participation of it, with this condition, that although they are subject to production and decay, it never becomes more or less, or endures any change. When any one, ascending from a correct system of Love, begins to contemplate this supreme beauty, he already touches the consummation of his labour. For such as discipline themselves upon this system, or are conducted by another beginning to ascend through these transitory objects which are beautiful, towards that which is beauty itself, proceeding as on steps from the love of one form to that of two, and from that of two, to that of all forms which are beautiful; and from beautiful forms to beautiful habits and institutions, and from institutions to beautiful doctrines; until, from the meditation of many doctrines, they arrive at that which is nothing else than the doctrine of the supreme beauty itself, in the knowledge and contemplation of which at length they repose.

"'Such a life as this, my dear Socrates,' exclaimed the stranger Prophetess, 'spent in the contemplation of

the beautiful, is the life for men to live; which if you chance ever to experience, you will esteem far beyond gold and rich garments, and even those lovely persons whom you and many others now gaze on with astonishment, and are prepared neither to eat nor drink so that you may behold and live for ever with these objects of your love! What then shall we imagine to be the aspect of the supreme beauty itself, simple, pure, uncontaminated with the intermixture of human flesh and colours, and all other idle and unreal shapes attendant on mortality; the divine, the original, the supreme, the monoeidic beautiful itself? What must be the life of 212
him who dwells with and gazes on that which it becomes us all to seek? Think you not that to him alone is accorded the prerogative of bringing forth, not images and shadows of virtue, for he is in contact not with a shadow but with reality; with virtue itself, in the production and nourishment of which he becomes dear to the Gods, and if such a privilege is conceded to any human being, himself immortal.'

"Such, O Phædrus, and my other friends, was what Diotima said. And being persuaded by her words, I have since occupied myself in attempting to persuade others, that it is not easy to find a better assistant than Love in seeking to communicate immortality to our human natures. Wherefore I exhort every one to honour Love; I hold him in honour, and chiefly exercise myself in amatory matters, and exhort others to do so; and now and ever do I praise the power and excellence of Love, in the best manner that I can. Let this discourse, if it pleases you, Phædrus, be considered as an encomium of Love; or call it by what other name you will."

The whole assembly praised his discourse, and Aristophanes was on the point of making some remarks on the allusion made by Socrates to him in a part of his discourse, when suddenly they heard a loud knocking at the door of the vestibule, and a clamour as of revellers, attended by a flute-player.—"Go, boys," said Agathon, "and see who is there: if they are any of our friends, call them in; if not, say that we have already

done drinking."—A minute afterwards, they heard the voice of Alcibiades in the vestibule excessively drunk and roaring out:—"Where is Agathon? Lead me to Agathon!"—The flute-player, and some of his companions then led him in, and placed him against the door-post, crowned with a thick crown of ivy and violets, and having a quantity of fillets on his head.—"My friends," he cried out, "hail! I am excessively drunk already, but I'll drink with you, if you will. If not, we will go away after having crowned Agathon, for which purpose I came. I assure you that I could not come yesterday, but I am now here with these fillets round my temples, that from my own head I may crown his who, with your leave, is the most beautiful and wisest of men. Are you laughing at me because I am
213 drunk? Ay, I know what I say is true, whether you laugh or not. But tell me at once whether I shall come in, or no. Will you drink with me?"

Agathon and the whole party desired him to come in, and recline among them; so he came in, led by his companions. He then unbound his fillets that he might crown Agathon, and though Socrates was just before his eyes, he did not see him, but sat down by Agathon, between Socrates and him, for Socrates moved out of the way to make room for him. When he sat down, he embraced Agathon and crowned him; and Agathon desired the slaves to untie his sandals, that he might make a third, and recline on the same couch. "By all means," said Alcibiades, "but what third companion have we here?" And at the same time turning round and seeing Socrates, he leaped up and cried out:—"O Hercules! what have we here? You, Socrates, lying in ambush for me wherever I go! and meeting me just as you always do, when I least expected to see you! And, now, what are you come here for? Why have you chosen to recline exactly in this place, and not near Aristophanes, or any one else who is, or wishes to be ridiculous, but have contrived to take your place beside the most delightful person of the whole party?"—"Agathon," said Socrates, "see if you cannot defend me. I declare my friendship for this man is a bad

business: from the moment that I first began to know him I have never been permitted to converse with, or so much as look upon any one else. If I do, he is so jealous and suspicious that he does the most extravagant things, and hardly refrains from beating me. I entreat you to prevent him from doing anything of that kind at present. Procure a reconciliation: or, if he perseveres in attempting any violence, I entreat you to defend me."—"Indeed," said Alcibiades, "I will not be reconciled to you; I shall find another opportunity to punish you for this. But now," said he, addressing Agathon, "lend me some of those fillets, that I may crown the wonderful head of this fellow, lest I incur the blame, that having crowned you, I neglected to crown him who conquers all men with his discourses, not yesterday alone as you did, but ever."

Saying this he took the fillets, and having bound the head of Socrates, and again having reclined, said: "Come, my friends, you seem to be sober enough. You must not flinch, but drink, for that was your agreement with me before I came in. I choose as president, until you have drunk enough—myself. Come, Agathon, if you have got a great goblet, fetch it out. But no matter, that wine-cooler will do; bring it, boy!" And observing that it held more than eight cups, he first 214
drank it off, and then ordered it to be filled for Socrates, and said:—"Observe, my friends, I cannot invent any scheme against Socrates, for he will drink as much as any one desires him, and not be in the least drunk." Socrates, after the boy had filled up, drank it off; and Eryximachus said:—"Shall we then have no conversation or singing over our cups, but drink down stupidly, just as if we were thirsty?" And Alcibiades said: "Ah, Eryximachus, I did not see you before; hail, you excellent son of a wise and excellent father!"—"Hail to you also," replied Eryximachus, "but what shall we do?"—"Whatever you command, for we ought to submit to your directions; a physician is worth a hundred common men. Command us as you please."—"Listen then," said Eryximachus, "before you came in, each of us had agreed to deliver as eloquent a discourse as he

could in praise of Love, beginning at the right hand; all the rest of us have fulfilled our engagement; you have not spoken, and yet have drunk with us: you ought to bear your part in the discussion; and having done so, command what you please to Socrates, who shall have the privilege of doing so to his right-hand neighbour, and so on to the others."—"Indeed, there appears some justice in your proposal, Eryximachus, though it is rather unfair to induce a drunken man to set his discourse in competition with that of those who are sober. And, besides, did Socrates really persuade you that what he just said about me was true, or do you not know that matters are in fact exactly the reverse of his representation? For I seriously believe that, should I praise in his presence, be he god or man, any other beside himself, he would not keep his hands off me. But I assure you, Socrates, I will praise no one beside yourself in your presence."

"Do so, then," said Eryximachus, "praise Socrates if you please."—"What," said Alcibiades, "shall I attack him, and punish him before you all?"—"What have you got into your head now," said Socrates, "are you going to expose me to ridicule, and to misrepresent me? Or what are you going to do?"—"I will only speak the truth; will you permit me on this condition?"—"I not only permit, but exhort you to say all the truth you know," replied Socrates.—"I obey you willingly," said Alcibiades, "and if I advance anything untrue, do you, if you please, interrupt me, and convict me of misrepresentation, for I would never willingly speak falsely.
215 And bear with me if I do not relate things in their order, but just as I remember them, for it is not easy for a man in my present condition to enumerate systematically all your singularities.

"I will begin the praise of Socrates by comparing him to a certain statue. Perhaps he will think that this statue is introduced for the sake of ridicule, but I assure you that it is necessary for the illustration of truth. I assert, then, that Socrates is exactly like those Silenuses that sit in the sculptors' shops, and which are carved holding flutes or pipes, but which, when divided

450-404 BC, nephew of Pericles,

in two, are found to contain withinside the images of the gods. I assert that Socrates is like the satyr Marsyas. That your form and appearance are like these satyrs', I think that even you will not venture to deny; and how like you are to them in all other things, now hear. Are you not scornful and petulant? If you deny this, I will bring witnesses. Are you not a piper, and far more wonderful a one than he? For Marsyas, and whoever now pipes the music that he taught, for that music which is of heaven, and described as being taught by Marsyas, enchants men through the power of the mouth. For if any musician, be he skilful or not, awakens this music, it alone enables him to retain the minds of men, and from the divinity of its nature makes evident those who are in want of the gods and initiation. You differ only from Marsyas in this circumstance, that you effect without instruments, by mere words, all that he can do. For when we hear Pericles, or any other accomplished orator, deliver a discourse, no one, as it were, cares any thing about it. But when any one hears you, or even your words related by another, though ever so rude and unskilful a speaker, be that person a woman, man or child, we are struck and retained, as it were, by the discourse clinging to our mind.

"If I was not afraid that I am a great deal too drunk, I would confirm to you by an oath the strange effects which I assure you I have suffered from his words, and suffer still; for when I hear him speak, my heart leaps up far more than the hearts of those who celebrate the Corybantic mysteries; my tears are poured out as he talks, a thing I have seen happen to many others beside myself. I have heard Pericles and other excellent orators, and have been pleased with their discourses, but I suffered nothing of this kind; nor was my soul ever on those occasions disturbed and filled with self-reproach, as if it were slavishly laid prostrate. But this Marsyas here has often affected me in the way 216
I describe, until the life which I lead seemed hardly worth living. Do not deny it, Socrates, for I well know that if even now I chose to listen to you, I could not

A seat Apollo in a

resist, but should again suffer the same effects. For, my friends, he forces me to confess that while I myself am still in want of many things, I neglect my own necessities, and attend to those of the Athenians. I stop my ears, therefore, as from the Syrens, and flee away as fast as possible, that I may not sit down beside him and grow old in listening to his talk. For this man has reduced me to feel the sentiment of shame, which I imagine no one would readily believe was in me; he alone inspires me with remorse and awe. For I feel in his presence my incapacity of refuting what he says, or of refusing to do that which he directs; but when I depart from him, the glory which the multitude confers overwhelms me. I escape, therefore, and hide myself from him, and when I see him I am overwhelmed with humiliation, because I have neglected to do what I have confessed to him ought to be done; and often and often have I wished that he were no longer to be seen among men. But if that were to happen, I well know that I should suffer far greater pain; so that where I can turn, or what I can do with this man, I know not. All this have I and many others suffered from the pipings of this satyr.

"And observe, how like he is to what I said, and what a wonderful power he possesses. Know that there is not one of you who is aware of the real nature of Socrates; but since I have begun, I will make him plain to you. You observe how passionately Socrates affects the intimacy of those who are beautiful, and how ignorant he professes himself to be; appearances in themselves excessively Silenic. This, my friends, is the external form with which, like one of the sculptured Sileni, he has clothed himself; for if you open him, you will find within admirable temperance and wisdom. For he cares not for mere beauty, but despises more than any one can imagine all external possessions, whether it be beauty or wealth, or glory, or any other thing for which the multitude felicitates the possessor. He esteems these things and us who honour them, as nothing, and lives among men, making all the objects of their admiration the playthings of his irony. But

I know not if any one of you have ever seen the divine images which are within, when he has been opened and is serious. I have seen them, and they are so supremely beautiful, so golden, so divine, and wonderful, that everything which Socrates commands surely 217
ought to be obeyed, even like the voice of a God.

"At one time we were fellow-soldiers, and had our 219
mess together in the camp before Potidæa. Socrates there overcame not only me, but every one beside, in endurance of toils: when, as often happens in a campaign, we were reduced to few provisions, there were none who could sustain hunger like Socrates; and when 220
we had plenty, he alone seemed to enjoy our military fare. He never drank much willingly, but when he was compelled he conquered all even in that to which he was least accustomed; and what is most astonishing, no person ever saw Socrates drunk either then or at any other time. In the depth of winter (and the winters there are excessively rigid,) he sustained calmly incredible hardships; and amongst other things, whilst the frost was intolerably severe, and no one went out of their tents, or if they went out, wrapt themselves up carefully, and put fleeces under their feet, and bound their legs with hairy skins, Socrates went out only with the same cloak on that he usually wore, and walked barefoot upon the ice; more easily, indeed, than those who had sandalled themselves so delicately: so that the soldiers thought that he did it to mock their want of fortitude. It would indeed be worth while to commemorate all that this brave man did and endured in that expedition. In one instance he was seen early in the morning, standing in one place wrapt in meditation; and as he seemed not to be able to unravel the subject of his thoughts, he still continued to stand as inquiring and discussing within himself, and when noon came, the soldiers observed him, and said to one another—'Socrates has been standing there thinking, ever since the morning.' At last some Ionians came to the spot, and having supped, as it was summer, bringing their blankets, they lay down to sleep in the cool; they observed that Socrates continued to stand there the

whole night until morning, and that, when the sun rose, he saluted it with a prayer and departed.

"I ought not to omit what Socrates is in battle. For in that battle after which the generals decreed to me the prize of courage, Socrates alone of all men was the saviour of my life, standing by me when I had fallen and was wounded, and preserving both myself and my arms from the hands of the enemy. On that occasion I entreated the generals to decree the prize, as it was most due, to him. And this, O Socrates, you cannot deny, that the generals wishing to conciliate a person of my rank, desired to give me the prize, you were far more earnestly desirous than the generals that this glory should be attributed not to yourself, but me.

"But to see Socrates when our army was defeated and scattered in flight at [Delium], was a spectacle worthy
221 to behold. On that occasion I was among the cavalry, and he on foot, heavily armed. After the total rout of our troops, he and Laches retreated together; I came up by chance, and seeing them, bade them be of good cheer, for that I would not leave them. As I was on horseback, and therefore less occupied by a regard of my own situation, I could better observe than at Potidæa the beautiful spectacle exhibited by Socrates on this emergency. How superior was he to Laches in presence of mind and courage! Your representation of him on the stage, O Aristophanes, was not wholly unlike his real self on this occasion, for he walked and darted his regards around with a majestic composure, looking tranquilly both on his friends and enemies; so that it was evident to every one, even from afar, that whoever should venture to attack him would encounter a desperate resistance. He and his companion thus departed in safety; for those who are scattered in flight are pursued and killed, whilst men hesitate to touch those who exhibit such a countenance as that of Socrates even in defeat.

"Many other and most wonderful qualities might well be praised in Socrates; but such as these might singly be attributed to others. But that which is unparalleled in Socrates, is, that he is unlike, and above comparison,

with all other men, whether those who have lived in ancient times, or those who exist now. For it may be conjectured, that Brasidas and many others are such as was Achilles. Pericles deserves comparison with Nestor and Antenor; and other excellent persons of various times may, with probability, be drawn into comparison with each other. But to such a singular man as this, both himself and his discourses are so uncommon, no one, should he seek, would find a parallel among the present or the past generations of mankind; unless they should say that he resembled those with whom I lately compared him, for, assuredly, he and his discourses are like nothing but the Sileni and the Satyrs. At first I forgot to make you observe how like his discourses are to those Satyrs when they are opened, for, if any one will listen to the talk of Socrates, it will appear to him at first extremely ridiculous; the phrases and expressions which he employs, fold around his exterior the skin, as it were, of a rude and wanton Satyr. He is always talking about great market-asses, and brass-founders, and leather-cutters, and skin-dressers; and this is his perpetual custom, so that any dull and unobservant person might easily laugh at his discourse. But if any one should see it opened, as it were, and 222
get within the sense of his words, he would then find that they alone of all that enters into the mind of man to utter, had a profound and persuasive meaning, and that they were most divine; and that they presented to the mind innumerable images of every excellence, and that they tended towards objects of the highest moment, or rather towards all that he who seeks the possession of what is supremely beautiful and good need regard as essential to the accomplishment of his ambition.

"These are the things, my friends, for which I praise Socrates."

Alcibiades having said this, the whole party burst into a laugh at his frankness, and Socrates said, "You seem to be sober enough, Alcibiades, else you would not have made such a circuit of words, only to hide the main design for which you made this long speech, and which, as it were carelessly, you just throw in at the

last; now, as if you had not said all this for the mere purpose of dividing me and Agathon? You think that I ought to be your friend, and to care for no one else. I have found you out; it is evident enough for what design you invented all this Satyrical and Silenic drama. But, my dear Agathon, do not let his device succeed. I entreat you to permit no one to throw discord between us."—"No doubt," said Agathon, "he sat down between us only that he might divide us; but this shall not assist his scheme, for I will come and sit near you." —"Do so," said Socrates, "come, there is room for you by me."—"Oh, Jupiter!" exclaimed Alcibiades, "what I endure from that man! He thinks to subdue every way; but, at least, I pray you, let Agathon remain between us."—"Impossible," said Socrates, "you have just praised me; I ought to praise him sitting at my right hand. If Agathon is placed beside you, will he not praise me before I praise him? Now, my dear
223 friend, allow the young man to receive what praise I can give him. I have a great desire to pronounce his encomium."—"Quick, quick, Alcibiades," said Agathon, "I cannot stay here, I must change my place, or Socrates will not praise me."—Agathon then arose to take his place near Socrates.

He had no sooner reclined than there came in a number of revellers—for some one who had gone out had left the door open—and took their places on the vacant couches, and everything became full of confusion; and no order being observed, every one was obliged to drink a great quantity of wine. Eryximachus, and Phædrus, and some others, said Aristodemus, went home to bed; that, for his part, he went to sleep on his couch, and slept long and soundly—the nights were then long—until the cock crew in the morning. When he awoke he found that some were still fast asleep, and others had gone home, and that Aristophanes, Agathon, and Socrates had alone stood it out, and were still drinking out of a great goblet which they passed round and round. Socrates was disputing between them. The beginning of their discussion Aristodemus said that he did not recollect, because he

was asleep; but it was terminated by Socrates forcing them to confess, that the same person is able to compose both tragedy and comedy, and that the foundations of the tragic and comic arts were essentially the same. They, rather convicted than convinced, went to sleep. Aristophanes first awoke, and then, it being broad daylight, Agathon. Socrates, having put them to sleep, went away, Aristodemus following him, and coming to the Lyceum he washed himself, as he would have done anywhere else, and after having spent the day there in his accustomed manner, went home in the evening.

THE MENO

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE

St. II. p. 70 *Meno, Socrates, A Servant Boy of Meno's, Anytus.*

SCENE.—*The Lycæum.*

Meno. CAN you tell me, Socrates, whether virtue is to be taught; or whether it is acquired, not through teaching, but through exercise and habit; or whether it comes neither by exercise, nor yet by teaching, but is by nature with those who are possessed of it; or comes it to them by some other way?

Socrates. You Thessalians, Meno, have been of old eminent among the Grecians. You have been long admired for your superior skill in horsemanship, and famed for the great wealth you are possessed of. But I think you have now acquired no less fame for wisdom. And amongst others of you, the fellow-citizens of your friend Aristippus of Larissa have distinguished themselves not a little in this respect. Now this is entirely the work of Gorgias. For in his travels, when he came to their city, he drew the chiefs of the Aleuadian family (one of whom is your friend Aristippus), and indeed all of highest quality in other states of Thessaly, to be the admirers of his wisdom. From him you Thessalians learned the habit of answering to any question whatever with an undaunted and a noble confidence, such indeed as becomes those who have a thorough knowledge of the subject proposed to them. For he in the same manner offered himself to be freely interrogated by any one of the Grecians, whom it should please to ask him, concerning any point which the party questioning might choose: and to no question of any person did he ever refuse an answer. But we in this place, my friend Meno, are in a condition quite the contrary. Among 71 us there is a dearth, as it were, of wisdom; which seems

to have forsaken our country, and to have fled to yours. So that if you should take it into your head to propose to any one here the question you have proposed to me, there is not a man of us who would not laugh and say, "Friend stranger, you must think me wonderfully wise, to know whether virtue is a thing which can be taught, or by what other means it is attained: when I am so far from knowing whether it can be taught or not, that I have not the good fortune to know so much as what virtue is." Now this, Meno, is exactly my own case. I am in the same poverty of knowledge as to this affair, and confess myself to be totally ignorant concerning the essence of virtue. How then should I be able to say what qualities are to be attributed to that which is utterly unknown to me? Or do you think it possible for a man, wholly ignorant who Meno is, to know whether Meno is a man of honour, a man of fortune, a man of generous spirit, or whether he is the reverse of all these characters? Do you think it possible?

Meno. I do not. But in good earnest, Socrates, do you really not know what virtue is? and do you give me leave to carry home such a character of you, and to make this report of you in my country?

Socrates. Not only that, my friend, but this further—that I never met anywhere with a man whom I thought master of such a piece of knowledge.

Meno. Did you never then meet with Gorgias, during his stay in this city?

Socrates. I did.

Meno. And did you think that he knew nothing of the matter?

Socrates. I do not perfectly remember, Meno, and therefore am not able to say directly what I then thought of him. But perhaps not only was he himself knowing in the nature of virtue, but what he used to say on that subject you also know. Do you then remind me what account he gave of virtue; or, if you are unwilling so to do, give me an account of it yourself; for I suppose you agree with him in opinion.

Meno. I do.

Socrates. Let us leave him, therefore, out of the

question, especially considering that he is absent. But what you yourself think virtue to be, tell me, Meno, and freely communicate your knowledge of it, that I may be happy in being convicted of having uttered what is so happily an untruth, when I said that I never anywhere met with a man who knew what virtue was; when, at the same time, both yourself and Gorgias shall appear to have been so well acquainted with the nature of it.

Meno. Whatever you may imagine, Socrates, it is by no means difficult to tell you what you desire to know. In the first place, to instance in the virtue of a man, nothing is easier to tell than that a man's virtue consists in his ability to manage affairs of state, and, in managing them, to be of service to the public and to its friends, to distress its enemies, and to guard, at the same time, with vigilance and circumspection, against any harm that might arise from those enemies in their turn. Then, if you would know what is the virtue of a woman, it is easy enough to run over the particulars: it is to manage well the affairs of her family, carefully to keep safe all that is in the house, and to hearken with due observance to her husband. Another kind of virtue belongs to a child, different too in a girl from what it is in a boy: so is it likewise of the aged. And if you choose to proceed further, the virtue of a free man is one thing, that of a
72 slave is another thing. Many more virtues are there, of all sorts; so that one cannot be at a loss to tell, concerning virtue, what it is. For in every action, and in every age of life, with reference to every kind of business, some peculiar virtue belongs to each person: and in vice also, I suppose, Socrates, there is the same respective difference, and the same variety.

Socrates. I think myself much favoured by Fortune, Meno; for, when I was only in quest of one virtue, I have found, it seems, a whole swarm of virtues hiving in your mind. But, to pursue this similitude, taken from bees:—Supposing, Meno, I had asked you what was the nature of a bee, and you had told me that bees were many and various, what would you have answered me if I had demanded of you further, whether you called them many and various, and differing one from another,

in respect of their being bees; or whether you thought they differed not in this respect, but with regard to something else, as beauty, or size, or other thing of like kind, accidental? What answer would you have made to such a question?

Meno. I should have answered thus; that so far as they were bees, and in this respect, they differed not at all one from another.

Socrates. Suppose, then, that I had afterwards said, Tell me, therefore, Meno, concerning this very nature of bees, in respect of which they do not differ, but all agree and are alike; what say you that it is? Should you have had any answer to have given me to this question?

Meno. I should.

Socrates. Just so is it with the virtues. Many indeed are they, and of various kinds: but they all agree in one and the same idea; through their agreement in which they are, all of them alike, virtues. This idea the man, who is asked the question which I have asked of you, ought to have in his eye when he answers it; and, copying from this idea, to draw a description of virtue. Do you not apprehend the meaning of what I say?

Meno. Tolerably well, I think I do. But I am not in the possession of it so fully as I could wish.

Socrates. Take it thus then.——Do you think after this manner concerning virtue only, that the virtue of a man is one thing, the virtue of a woman another thing, and so of other respective virtues, that they are all different? or have you the same way of thinking as to the health, size, and strength of the body? Do you think the health of a man to be one thing, the health of a woman to be a thing different? or is the same idea of health everywhere, wherever health is, whether it be in a man, or in whatever subject it be found?

Meno. The health of a man and the health of a woman, I think, are equally and alike health, one and the same thing.

Socrates. Do you not think after the same manner with regard to size and strength; that a woman, if she be strong, is strong according to the same idea, and with

the same strength, which gives a strong man the denomination of strong? By the same strength I mean this, that whether strength be in a man, or in a woman, considering it as strength, there is no difference; or do you think that there is any difference between strength and strength?

Meno. I think there is not any.

Socrates. And will any difference, think you then, be
73 found in virtue, with respect to its being virtue, whether it be in a child or in an aged person, in a woman or in a man?

Meno. This case of virtue, Socrates, seems somehow to be not exactly parallel with those other instances.

Socrates. Why? Did you not tell me that the virtue of a man consisted in his well-managing of civil affairs, and that of a woman in the well-managing of her household?

Meno. I did.

Socrates. I ask you, then, whether it is possible to manage any affairs well, whether civil or domestic, or any other affairs whatever, without a prudent and a just management?

Meno. By no means.

Socrates. If then the management be just and prudent, must not the managers manage with justice and with prudence?

Meno. They must.

Socrates. Both of them, therefore, have occasion for the same things, to qualify them for being good managers, both the woman and the man, namely, justice and prudence.

Meno. It appears they have.

Socrates. And how is it in the case of a child, or that of an old man? Can these ever be good, if they are dissolute and dishonest?

Meno. By no means.

Socrates. But only by their being sober and honest?

Meno. Certainly.

Socrates. All persons, therefore, who are good, are good in the same way; for they are good by being possessed of the same qualities.

Meno. It seems so.

Socrates. Now if virtue were not the same thing in them all, they would not be good in the same way.

Meno. They would not.

Socrates. Seeing, therefore, that virtue is the same thing in all of them, endeavour to recollect and tell me, what was the account given of it by Gorgias, which was the same, it seems, with the account you would give of it yourself?

Meno. What else is it than to be able to govern men? If you are in search of that, which is one and the same thing in all persons who have virtue.

Socrates. It is the very thing I am in search of. But is this then the virtue of a child, Meno? And is it the virtue of a slave, to be able to govern his master? Do you think him to be any longer a slave, when he can govern?

Meno. I think he is then by no means a slave indeed, Socrates.

Socrates. Neither is it proper, my friend, that he should be so. Consider this also further. You say it is virtue to be able to govern. Should we not immediately subjoin the word *justly*, and say, to govern justly? For you would not say, that to govern unjustly is virtue.

Meno. I think we should. For justice, Socrates, is virtue.

Socrates. Virtue is it, Meno, or some certain virtue?

Meno. How mean you by this distinction?

Socrates. I mean no otherwise than as everything else whatever is distinguished: to instance, if you please, in roundness. Of this I should say that it is some certain figure, and not thus simply and absolutely that it is figure. And for this reason should I express myself in that manner, because there are other figures beside the round.

Meno. You would thus speak rightly. And indeed, to say the truth, I myself not only call justice a virtue, but say that other virtues there are beside.

Socrates. Say, what these other virtues are. As I 74
would recount to you, were you to bid me, other figures

beside the round; do you recount to me, in like manner, other virtues beside justice.

Meno. Well then; courage I think to be a virtue, and temperance another, and wisdom, and magnanimity, and a great many more.

Socrates. Again, Meno, we have met with the same accident as before; we have again found many virtues, while in search of one only; though then indeed in a different way from that in which we have now alighted on them: but the one virtue, which is the same through all these, we are not able to find.

Meno. For I am not able as yet, Socrates, to apprehend such virtue as you are inquiring after, that one in all, as in other things I am able.

Socrates. Probably so; but I will do the best I can to help us onward in our inquiry. Already you apprehend, in some measure, that thus it is in everything. For should any person have asked you what was figure, the thing I just now mentioned, and you had said it was roundness; were he then to ask you, according to the same distinction which I made concerning justice, whether roundness was figure, or some certain figure; you would answer, it was some certain figure.

Meno. Without all doubt.

Socrates. And would you not answer thus for this reason, because there are other figures beside the round?

Meno. For that very reason.

Socrates. And were he to ask you further, of what sort those other figures were, you would tell him?

Meno. I should.

Socrates. Again; questioned in the same manner concerning colour, what it is? had you answered, It is whiteness; should the questioner immediately proceed to this further question, whether whiteness is colour, or some certain colour? you would say, Some certain colour; because there happen to be other colours.

Meno. I should.

Socrates. And if he were to bid you enumerate those other colours, you would speak of colours, which happen to be colours no less than the white.

Meno. Certainly.

Socrates. If then he were to prosecute the argument, as I do, he would say, We are always getting into multitude; deal not with me in this manner: but since to all this multitude you give one common name; since you tell me there is none of them which is not figure; and that, notwithstanding, they are contrary some to others; what is this which comprehends the round as well as the straight, this thing to which you give the name of figure, and tell me that the round is figure not more than is the straight? or do you not say this?

Meno. I do.

Socrates. I ask you, then, whether when you say this, you mean it in respect of roundness, and that the round is not more round than is the straight? or with regard to straightness, and that the straight is not more straight than is the round?

Meno. I mean not thus, Socrates.

Socrates. But it is with a view to figure, that you assert the round not more to be figure than is the straight, nor the straight more than is the round.

Meno. True.

Socrates. Try then if you can tell me, what that thing is which is called by this general name of figure. Now suppose, that to an inquirer in this way concerning 75
figure, or concerning colour, you were to say, I do not comprehend what it is you would have, man; nor do I know what it is you mean: he perhaps would wonder; and would say, Do you not comprehend that I am inquiring, what is the same in all these? Would you have nothing to say neither after this, Meno, were you to be asked, what that was in the round, in the straight, and in the other things you call figures, in all of them the same? Endeavour to find out and tell me what it is; that you may the better afterwards consider of, and answer to, the like kind of question concerning virtue.

Meno. Not so, Socrates; but do you yourself rather say what figure is.

Socrates. Would you have me oblige you in this point?

Meno. By all means.

Socrates. Shall you then be willing to tell me what virtue is?

Meno. I shall.

Socrates. Let us then do our best; for the cause deserves it.

Meno. Without all doubt.

Socrates. Come then; let us try if we can tell you what figure is. See if you can accept the following account of figure. Let us say, figure is that which of all things is the only one that always accompanies colour. Are you satisfied with this account? or do you inquire any further? For my part, I should be well contented if you would give me but as good an account of virtue.

Meno. But, Socrates, this is weak and silly.

Socrates. How so?

Meno. According to your account, that is figure which always accompanies colour.

Socrates. Well.

Meno. But should any person now reply, that he knew not what colour was, and was equally at a loss concerning colour and concerning figure, what could you think of the answer that you had given to his question?

Socrates. I?—that I had answered with truth. And if my questioner happened to be one of your wise men, your disputers and contenders, I would tell him, that I had spoken; and that, if I had not spoken rightly, it was his business to take up the argument, and to refute what I had said. But if two parties, such as you and I here, as friends, and in a friendly way, were inclined to have discourse together, their answers to each other's questions ought to be made in a milder manner, and to be more rational. Now it is perhaps more rational, that an answer should not only be agreeable to truth, but besides, should be conceived in terms confessedly understood by the party questioning. Accordingly, I shall now attempt to make you such a kind of answer. For tell me; do you not call some certain thing by the name of end, speaking of such a thing as bound or extreme? For by all these words I mean the same thing. Prod-

icus, indeed, might possibly dispute it with us: but you would use these expressions indifferently, that such or such a thing is bounded, or, that it has an end. This is all I mean; nothing of subtle disquisition, or nice distinction.

Meno. Well; there is something which I call end; and I think I understand what you mean.

Socrates. And is there not something which you call 76
superficies? another, which you call solid? such as those, I mean, which are the subjects of geometry.

Meno. I call certain things by the names you mention.

Socrates. Now then, from these premises which you admit, you may understand what I mean by figure in general. In every figure, that which bounds the solid, I call figure. And to express this in one short proposition, I should say that figure is the bound of solid.

Meno. And what say you colour is?

Socrates. You use me ill now, Meno. You put an old man to the task of answering, yet are unwilling yourself to take the trouble only of recollecting and telling me what Gorgias said that virtue was.

Meno. But I will; after you have told me what colour is.

Socrates. A man with his eyes hoodwinked might perceive from your way of conversing, Meno, that you are handsome, and still have your admirers.

Meno. How so?

Socrates. Because you do nothing but command in conversation, as fine ladies do, that are used to have their wills in all things; for they tyrannize so long as their beauty lasts. At the same time too, perhaps you have discovered me, how easy I am to be subdued by beauty, and how apt to stoop to it. I shall do therefore as you would have me, and shall answer to your question.

Meno. By all means do, and gratify my request.

Socrates. Do you choose that I should make my answer in the style of Gorgias, that by this means you may apprehend it the more easily?

Meno. I should be glad that you would do so, most undoubtedly.

Socrates. Do you not hold, you and Gorgias, that certain effluvia flow forth from bodies, agreeably to the doctrine of Empedocles?

Meno. We hold that doctrine strongly.

Socrates. And do you not hold certain pores, into which and through which those effluvia pass?

Meno. Certainly.

Socrates. And that some of those effluvia are adapted to some of these pores, but are either less or greater than other pores?

Meno. Things are so framed.

Socrates. And do you not admit of something which you call sight?

Meno. I do.

Socrates. These premises being granted, "Now let your mind accompany my words," as Pindar says. Colour then is the flowing off from figures, commensurate with the sight, and by that sense perceived.

Meno. In this answer, Socrates, I think you have answered as well as possible.

Socrates. It may be that you think so, because you are accustomed to a language of this kind; and because at the same time you perceive yourself, as I imagine, able from thence to account in the same way for sound, and smell, and many other things of like kind.

Meno. It really is so.

Socrates. The answer, Meno, was theatrical and pompous; and so it pleased you more than that which I gave you concerning figure.

Meno. Indeed it did.

Socrates. And yet I persuade myself, O son of Alexidemus, that not this, but that other, was the better answer. I think too, that you yourself would be of the same opinion, if you are not, as you said you were yesterday, under a necessity of going away before the mysteries, but could stay and be initiated.

77 *Meno.* But if you would tell me many other things such as this, I would certainly stay and hear them.

Socrates. My best endeavours to say other such things shall certainly not be wanting, for my own sake as well as yours. But I fear I shall not be able to utter

many sentences of that kind. But now it comes to your turn to try if you can perform your part of the engagement, in giving me an account of what virtue is, virtue in general, the same in all particular virtues. And do not go on, making many out of one; as is often said jocosely of those who pound or beat anything to pieces. But leaving virtue as it is, whole and entire, define the nature of it, and tell me what it is. Patterns of such a definition you have had from me.

Meno. I think then, Socrates, that virtue is agreeably to that of the poet,

> To feel a joy from what is fair,
> And [o'er it] to have power—

and accordingly I say, that virtue is this; having the desire of things that are fair, to have it in our power to gain them.

Socrates. I ask you then, whether you suppose the persons who desire things that are fair, to desire things that are good?

Meno. Certainly.

Socrates. In giving that definition of virtue then, did you suppose that some men there were who desire things which are evil, others who desire things which are good? Do you not think, my friend, that all men desire things which are good?

Meno. I do not.

Socrates. But that some desire things which are evil?

Meno. I do.

Socrates. Think you that these men desire things evil, with an opinion of their being good? or that, knowing them to be evil, yet they nevertheless desire them?

Meno. I answer Yes to both those questions.

Socrates. Is there any man then, do you imagine, who knowing the things which are evil to be what they are, that is, evil, yet nevertheless desire them?

Meno. Without doubt.

Socrates. What do you mean, when you say he desires them? Do you not mean, that he desires to have them?

Meno. To have them? For what can I mean besides?

Socrates. Does he desire them, think you, imagining that evil things are advantageous to the person who has them, or knowing that evil things are hurtful wherever they are?

Meno. There are persons who imagine of things which are indeed evil, that they are advantageous; and there are who know them to be hurtful.

Socrates. Do you think that they know the evil things to be evil, those who imagine such evil things to be advantageous?

Meno. By no means do I think that.

Socrates. Is it not then evident, that such persons desire not things evil, such as know not the nature of those things which they desire; but rather, that they desire things which they imagine to be good, but which in reality are evil? So that those who are ignorant of them, and falsely imagine them to be good, plainly desire good things. Do they not?

Meno. Such sort of persons, I must own, seem to be desirous of good things.

Socrates. But those others, those who desire things which are evil, as you say, and who at the same time know that evil things are hurtful to the possessor, do they know that they themselves shall receive harm from those evil things in their having them?

78 *Meno.* It is clear that they must know it.

Socrates. But know they not, that such as receive harm are in evil plight, so far as harm has befallen them?

Meno. This also must they know.

Socrates. And know they not besides, that such as are in evil plight are unhappy too?

Meno. I presume they do.

Socrates. Is there any man then, who chooses to be in evil plight, and to be unhappy?

Meno. I suppose there is not any, Socrates.

Socrates. No man, therefore, O Meno, wills or chooses anything evil; if it be true, that no man wills or chooses to be in evil plight, or to be unhappy. For indeed what else is it to be thoroughly unhappy, than to

desire things which are evil, and to have them our own?

Meno. I suspect that what you say, Socrates, is true. And no man wills or chooses anything evil.

Socrates. Did you not say just now, that virtue consisted in the willing or desiring things which are good, and in the having it in our power to gain them?

Meno. I did say so; it is true.

Socrates. Is not this will or desire according to what has been said in all men? so that, in this respect, one man is not at all better than another man?

Meno. It appears so.

Socrates. It appears, therefore, that if one man is better than another, he must be so in respect of his power.

Meno. Undoubtedly.

Socrates. This therefore, as it seems, according to your account, is virtue, the power of gaining things which are good.

Meno. The case seems to me, Socrates, to be entirely so, as you now state it.

Socrates. Let us examine then if this account of yours be true: for perhaps it may be so. You say, that to be able to gain good things is virtue.

Meno. I do.

Socrates. Good things do you not call such things as health and riches, that is, the possession of gold and silver, honours also in the state, and offices in the government? You do not speak of any other things as good, beside things of this kind?

Meno. No other; I mean all such sort of things.

Socrates. Well then, to get money is virtue; as says Meno, the hereditary guest of the great king. But let me ask you a question concerning this point; whether you would choose to add something to this account of virtue, and to say that virtue is to get money honestly and religiously? or whether this addition makes no difference in your account; but that, however unjustly it be acquired, you call the mere acquisition of money, equally in any way, virtue?

Meno. By no means; for, to acquire it unjustly, I call vice and wickedness.

Socrates. By all means, therefore, as it appears, this acquisition of money ought to be accompanied by honesty, or prudence, or sanctity, or some other part of virtue; for otherwise it will not be virtue, notwithstanding it procures for us good things.

Meno. For without that how should it be virtue?

Socrates. And if a man forbear to gain money, whether for himself or others, when he cannot gain it without dishonesty, is not the forbearance of this gain also virtue?

Meno. It is apparent.

Socrates. Not the gaining of these good things, therefore, must be virtue, more than the forbearance of that gain; but, as it seems, that which comes accompanied by honesty is virtue; that which is without anything of that kind is vice and wickedness.

79 *Meno.* I think it must of necessity be as you say.

Socrates. Did we not say, a little while since, that honesty and prudence, and everything of that kind, was a part of virtue?

Meno. We did.

Socrates. Then, Meno, you are in jest with me.

Meno. How so, Socrates?

Socrates. Because, when I had desired you, as I did just now, not to split virtue into pieces, and had given you patterns to copy after, that you might answer as you ought; you, without paying any regard to them, tell me that virtue is the power of gaining good things with honesty or justice; yet this, you say, is only a part of virtue.

Meno. I do.

Socrates. It is to be collected then, from your own concessions, that with a part of virtue, to do whatever one does, this is virtue. For justice, you say, is but a part of virtue, and so of every other thing of like kind.

Meno. What then? granting that I say this.

Socrates. It follows that, having been requested to tell me what the whole of virtue is, you are far from giving such a complete account of it: for you say, that every action is virtue which is performed with a part of virtue; as though you had already told me what virtue

was in the whole, and that I should know it when you come to split it into parts. We must therefore, as it seems to me, take the matter again from the beginning, and recur to this question, What is virtue? Or should every action, accompanied with a part of virtue, be said to be virtue itself? For it is saying this, to say that every action, accompanied with justice, is virtue.——Do you think there is no occasion for us to resume the same question; but that a man may know a part of virtue, what it is, without knowing what virtue is itself?

Meno. I think he cannot.

Socrates. For, if you remember, when I answered just now your question concerning figure, we rejected such a kind of answer as aimed at explaining the proposed subject in terms not as yet confessedly understood, but whose meaning was still the subject of inquiry.

Meno. And we did right, Socrates, in rejecting such an answer.

Socrates. I would not have you imagine then, while we are as yet inquiring what virtue is, the whole of it, that by answering in terms which signify the parts of virtue, you will be able to explain to any man the nature of virtue; or, indeed, that the nature of any other thing can be explained in such a way, but that still there will be need of repeating the same question what virtue is, that which is the subject of our conversation. Or do you think that I speak idly and nothing to the purpose?

Meno. I think you speak rightly.

Socrates. Begin again, therefore, and tell me what it is you hold virtue to be, you and your friend Gorgias?

Meno. Socrates, I heard, before I had conversed with you, that the only part you take in conversation is this: 80
—You pretend to be at a loss and doubtful yourself upon all subjects, and make others too no less to be at a loss what to think and say. You seem to be now playing the same conjurers' tricks upon me; you manifestly use incantations to bewitch me, and to fill me with such perplexity that I know not what to say. If you will allow me to joke a little, I think you resemble exactly, not only in form but in other respects also, that broad sea-fish called the cramp-fish; for that too never fails to

give a numbness to every person who either touches or approaches it. You seem to have done some such thing at present to me, and to have benumbed me. For I actually suffer a kind of numbness and stupidity, both in mind and body, and find myself disabled from giving you any answer; and yet have I a thousand times discoursed much about virtue, and to many persons, and extremely well too, as I thought; but I am now not in the least able to tell so much as what virtue is. I think that you have acted very prudently in never going out of your own country either by sea or land. For if you was to behave in this manner in any other city where you are a stranger, you would run a risk of being driven thence as a magician or enchanter.

Socrates. You are full of craftiness, Meno; and I was very near being deceived by you.

Meno. Tell me how, Socrates, I pray you?

Socrates. I know with what design you brought a simile to which you likened me.

Meno. With what design now, do you imagine?

Socrates. That I, on my part, might bring some simile or resemblance of you. For this I know to be true of all handsome persons, they love to have images and pictures made of them. And indeed it is their interest; for of handsome persons the pictures are handsome too. But I shall forbear the drawing of your picture in return. And as to that which you have produced of me, if the cramp-fish be itself numb, and through its numbness benumb others also, then am I like to it, but otherwise I am not. For I do not lead others into doubtfulness on any subject, and make them be at a loss what to say; when at the same time I can easily explain the matter in hand, and have no doubts at all within my own mind: but as I am entirely distressed for true definitions of things myself; in this condition I involve in the same distresses those with whom I am conversing. Thus at present concerning the nature of virtue; what it is, I, for my part, know not: you indeed knew formerly, perhaps, before that you had touched me; but now you are like one who knows nothing of the matter. I am desirous, however,

of considering it together with you, and of our searching out jointly what kind of a thing virtue is.

Meno. But in what way, Socrates, will you search for a thing of which you are entirely ignorant? For by what mark which may discover it will you look for it when you know none of the marks that distinguish it? Or, if you should not fail of meeting with it, how will you discern it, when met with, to be the very thing you was in search of, and knew nothing of before?

Socrates. I apprehend, Meno, what it is you mean. Do you observe how captious a way of reasoning you introduce? For it follows from hence, that it is impossible for a man to seek, either for that which he knows, or for that of which he is ignorant. For no man would seek to know what he knows, because he has the knowledge of it already, and has no need of seeking for what he has. Nor could any man seek for what he is ignorant of, because he would not know what he is seeking for.

Meno. Do you not think then, Socrates, that this 81
way of reasoning is fair and right?

Socrates. Not I, for my part.

Meno. Can you say in what respect it is wrong?

Socrates. I can. For I have heard the sayings of men and women who were wise, and knowing in divine things.

Meno. What sayings?

Socrates. Such as I think true, as well as beautiful.

Meno. But what sayings were they? and by whom were they uttered?

Socrates. Those who uttered them were of the priests and priestesses, such as made it their business to be able to give a rational account of those things in which they were employed. The same sayings are delivered also by Pindar, and many other of the poets, as many as are divine. The sayings are these; but do you consider with yourself whether you think them true. These persons then tell us that the soul of man is immortal; that sometimes it ends, which is called dying; and that afterwards it begins again, but never is dissolved; and that for this reason we ought to live, throughout our lives, with all sanctity. For

STROPHE

When guilt of lesser crimes the soul hath stain'd,
Not meriting sharp pains for aye;
And eight dark dreary years she hath remain'd
In Hades, barr'd from gladd'ning day;
Preserving all that time her sense
Of good, lamenting her lost innocence;
With sorrow if her guilt she rue,
And Proserpine should deem that sorrow true,
She accepts in full atonement such repentance due.

ANTISTROPHE

Then the ninth year sends back the soul to light,
And former objects here on earth:
Of these, thro' death, again she loses sight;
Again to life renews her birth.
At length, two trials well endur'd,
The soul, to lesser virtues well inur'd,
Is born some king, for good renown'd;
Or sage, well learn'd in wisdom's lore profound;
Or hero, by his prowess spreading peace around.

EPODE

Thro' goodness, wisdom, virtue, truly great;
And greatly meriting advancement high;
Loosen'd from body, wing'd and fleet,
Freely she mounts to purest sky;
Ne'er more on earth to live, ne'er more to die.
Amongst the gods in starry sheen,
Far off and wide thro' Nature seen,
She fixes her abode;
Assuming her celestial throne,
To godlike state of being grown,
A deathless demi-god.
Thence thro' the rest of time,
In hymns religious and in holy rhyme,
Mortals below shall lift their lays,
The deathless demi-god to praise;
Who, freed from earthly dross,
And ev'ry element of body gross,
To intellectual bliss in heav'nly seat could climb.

The soul then being immortal, having been often born, having beheld the things which are here, the things which are in Hades, and all things, there is nothing of which she has not gained the knowledge. No wonder, therefore, that she is able to recollect, with regard to virtue as well as to other things, what formerly she

knew. For all things in nature being linked together in relationship, and the soul having heretofore known all things, nothing hinders but that any man, who has recalled to mind, or, according to the common phrase, who has learnt, one thing only, should of himself recover all his ancient knowledge, and find out again all the rest of things; if he has but courage, and faints not in the midst of his researches. For inquiry and learning is reminiscence all. We therefore ought not to hearken to that sophistical way of reasoning aforementioned; for our believing it to be true would make us idle. And, accordingly, the indolent, and such as are averse to taking pains, delight to hear it. But this other way of thinking, which I have just now given you an account of, makes men diligent, sets them at work, and puts upon them inquiry. And as I believe it to be true, I am willing, with your assistance, to inquire into the nature of virtue.

Meno. With all my heart, Socrates. But say you this absolutely, that we do not learn anything; and that all, which we call learning, is only reminiscence? Can you teach me to know this doctrine to be true?

Socrates. I observed to you before how full you are of craftiness, O Meno. And, to confirm my observation, you now ask me if I can teach you; I, who say that there is no such thing as teaching, but that all our knowledge is reminiscence; that I may appear directly to contradict myself. 82

Meno. Not so, Socrates, by Jupiter. I did not express myself in those terms with any such design; but merely from habit, and the common usage of that expression. But if any way you can prove to me that your doctrine is true, do so.

Socrates. This is by no means an easy talk. However, for your sake, I am willing to try and do my utmost. Call hither to me then one of those your numerous attendants, which ever you please, that I may prove in him the truth of what I say.

Meno. I will, gladly. Come hither, you.

Socrates. Is he a Grecian, and speaks he the Greek language?

Meno. Perfectly well. He was born in my own family.

Socrates. Be attentive now, and observe whether he appears to recollect within himself, or to learn anything from me.

Meno. I shall.

Socrates. Tell me, boy; do you know what a square space is? Is it of such a figure as this?

Boy. It is.

Socrates. A square space then is that which has all these lines equal, A B, B C, C D, D A, four in number.

Boy. It is so truly.

Socrates. Has it not also these lines, which are drawn through the middle of it, A C and B D, equal each to the other?

Boy. Yes.

Socrates. Cannot you imagine a space, square like this, but larger; and another such, but lesser?

Boy. Yes, for certain.

Socrates. Now if the side A B should be two feet long, and the side A D should be two feet long also, how many feet square will the whole space contain? Consider it in this manner. If, in the side A B, the space should be two feet long, and in the side A D it should be but one foot; would not the square be that of two feet once told?

Boy. It would.

Socrates. But since it is two feet this way as well as the other way, is it not a space of two feet twice told?

Boy. Just so.

Socrates. It is then a space of two feet?

Boy. So it is.

Socrates. How many feet are twice two? reckon them, and tell me.

Boy. Four feet, Socrates.

Socrates. May not a space be made E F G H, double to that other in size, but of the same kind, having, like that, all its sides equal?

Boy. Yes, sure.

Socrates. How many square feet then will this space be of?

Boy. Eight.

Socrates. Come now, try and tell me, of what length is each of the sides in this square space. Now the sides of that square, you know, we have supposed to be two feet long. Of what length then are the sides of this square, which is double in largeness to that other?

Boy. It is plain, Socrates, that they are twice as long.

Socrates. You see, Meno, that I teach him none of these things which he asserts; I only ask him questions. And now this boy imagines that he knows of what length the lines are which contain a space of eight square feet. Do you not think he does?

Meno. I do.

Socrates. And does he really know?

Meno. Certainly not.

Socrates. But he imagines them to be twice as long as the lines, which contain a space of four square feet.

Meno. He does.

Socrates. I now view him ready to recollect, from this time forward, rightly and as he ought. Now hear me, boy. You say that lines, double in length to the sides of the square A B C D, contain a space double to 83
it in largeness: I mean a space of the same kind; not one way long, the other way short; but every way of equal length, like the space A B C D, only twice as large, that is, a space of eight square feet. Consider now whether you still think this square E F G H to be measured by a line twice as long as the line which measures the square A B C D.

Boy. I do.

Socrates. Suppose we add to the line A B, from hence, from the point B, another line of equal length the line B I. Is not the line A I of a length double to that of the line A B?

Boy. Yes, sure.

Socrates. Now, from the line A I, do you say that a space will be made of eight square feet, if four lines, each of them as long as the line A I, be drawn so as to contain space?

Boy. I do.

Socrates. Let us then draw these four equal lines so as to contain space, A I, I K, K L, L A. Is this space now any other than that which you say is of eight square feet?

Boy. No; it is the very same.

Socrates. Are there not in this space A I K L these four spaces, A B M O, B I P M, M P K N, N L O M, each of which is equal to that space of four square feet, A B C D?

Boy. So there be.

Socrates. How large is the whole space A I K L? Is it not four times as large as the space A B C D?

Boy. To be sure it is.

Socrates. Is it only double now to the space A B C D, when it is four times as large?

Boy. No, by Jupiter.

Socrates. What proportion has it then to the space A B C D?

Boy. A quadruple one.

Socrates. From a line, therefore, double in length, is drawn a square space, not double, but quadruple, in largeness.

Boy. Why, it is very true.

Socrates. Four times four make sixteen: do they not?

Boy. They do.

Socrates. But from a line of what length is to be drawn a square, such a one as we suppose the square E F G H to be, that is, a space of eight square feet? You see that from the line A I is drawn a square, quadruple in largeness to the square A B C D.

Boy. I see it.

Socrates. And from the line A B, which is half of the line A I, a square, you see, is drawn, which is but the fourth part of the square A K.

Boy. It is.

Socrates. Well; but that square of eight feet E F G H, is it not twice as large as the square A B C D, and half as large as the square A I K L?

Boy. It is so, to be sure.

Socrates. Must it not then be drawn from a line longer than the line A B, and shorter than the line A I?

Boy. I think it must.

Socrates. You say well; for speak that only which you think. And tell me, was not the line A B supposed to be two feet long, and the line A I four feet long?

Boy. Yes.

Socrates. The side therefore of the square E F G H must be shorter than a line of four feet, and longer than a line of two feet.

Boy. It must so.

Socrates. Try now, and tell me how long you think it is.

Boy. Three feet long.

Socrates. If then it be so, let us take half of the line B I, namely, B Q, and add it to the line A B; and now this line A Q will be such a line as you speak of, a line three feet long. For the lines A B, B I, are each of them two feet long, and the line B Q is half of the line B I, and therefore is one foot long. In the same manner, let us take half the line O L, namely, O R, and add it to the line A O; and thus the line A R will be three feet long also. For the lines A O, O L, are each of them two feet long, and the line O R is one foot long. From these two lines, A Q, A R, let us complete the square A Q S R; and it is such a square as you was speaking of, the square of a line three feet long.

Boy. It is so.

Socrates. If then the whole space be three feet long and three feet broad, it is a space of thrice three feet.

Boy. It appears so to be.

Socrates. And how many feet are thrice three?

Boy. Nine.

Socrates. But how many feet were there to be in a square twice as large as the square A B C D?

Boy. Eight.

Socrates. It is not true then that from a line three feet long is to be drawn a square containing only eight feet.

Boy. It is not.

Socrates. Try and tell us then exactly how long the line must be from which such a square is to be drawn. Or, if you choose not to tell us the measure of it in numbers, at least point out to us from what line it may be drawn.

84 *Boy.* Now, by Jove, Socrates, I do not know.

Socrates. Do you observe, Meno, what progress this boy has already made, and whereabouts he is, in the way to recollection? You see that, from the beginning of his examination, he knew not from what line a square eight feet large was to be drawn; as indeed neither does he yet know; but he then fancied that he knew, and answered boldly as a knowing person would, without suspecting that he should ever be at a loss for a true answer. But he now finds himself at a loss, and thinks himself as ignorant as he really is.

Meno. You say what is true.

Socrates. Is he not then in a better disposition with regard to the matter which he was ignorant of?

Meno. I agree with you in this too.

Socrates. In making him therefore to be at a loss what to answer, and in benumbing him after the manner of the cramp-fish, have we done him any harm?

Meno. I think, we have not.

Socrates. And more than this, we have advanced him a little, as it seems, in the way of finding out the truth in the subject laid before him. For, being now sensible of his ignorance, he is prepared to seek and to inquire. But he then fancied, that he could readily, at any time, and in the presence of any number of people, show with certainty, that a square, twice as large as some other square, was produced from a line twice as long.

Meno. So it seemed.

Socrates. Think you then, that he would have set about seeking or learning that, which, however ignorant of it, he fancied that he knew; till he had found himself at a loss, and felt his ignorance; and was become therefore desirous of finding it out?

Meno. I think, Socrates, that he never would.

Socrates. The benumbing him then was of advantage to him.

Meno. I think it was.

Socrates. Now observe how, from this sense of his ignorance, he will find out the truth in searching for it with me; though the part which I shall bear in the inquiry will be merely to ask questions, and not to teach. But be sure to mind, if anywhere you can catch me teaching or telling him anything, instead of asking him his own opinions. Now, boy, tell me, is not this space A B C D our square, four feet large? Do you apprehend me?

Boy. I do.

Socrates. Suppose we add to it this other square B T U C, equal to it in largeness?

Boy. Well.

Socrates. And a third square, too, this, D C W X, equal in largeness to either of the others?

Boy. Very well.

Socrates. What, if we add another square of equal size, to fill up the corner here, this U C W Y?

Boy. Very well: and so it does.

Socrates. Are not then these four squares equal all, A B C D, B T U C, C D X W, W Y U C?

Boy. Yes.

Socrates. This whole large square then, A T Y X, how much larger is it than the square A B C D?

Boy. Four times as big.

Socrates. But we wanted a square only twice as big. Do you not remember?

Boy. I remember it very well.

Socrates. Do not these lines, which I draw from corner to corner in each of these squares, B D, B U, D W, W U, cut each square in half?

Boy. They do. 85

Socrates. Are not these four lines drawn of equal length, these, which enclose the square space, B D W U?

Boy. They be so.

Socrates. Now consider, how large this square is which is enclosed by those four lines.

Boy. Why, I do not know.

Socrates. Are not those four squares, A B C D,

B T U C, C D X W, W Y U C, cut each of them in half by these four lines, B D, B U, D W, W U, drawn within them; or are they not?

Boy. They be.

Socrates. In the square, A T Y X, how many spaces are there then, as large as the space A B C D?

Boy. Four.

Socrates. And how many such in the square, B D W U, from which half the other is cut off?

Boy. Two.

Socrates. How many more are four than two?

Boy. Twice as many.

Socrates. How many square feet then doth this square, B D W U, contain?

Boy. Eight.

Socrates. From what line is it drawn?

Boy. From this here.

Socrates. From the line B D, do you say, reaching from corner to corner of the square A B C D, which contains four square feet?

Boy. Yes.

Socrates. The sophists call such a line the diameter. If the diameter then be its name, from the diameter of a square, as you say, you boy of Meno's, may be drawn a square twice as large as the square of which it is the diameter.

Boy. It is so, Socrates, for certain.

Socrates. Well; what think you, Meno? Has this boy, in his answers, given any other opinion than his own?

Meno. None other: he has given his own opinion only.

Socrates. And yet, but a little before, as we both observed, he had no knowledge of the matter proposed, and knew not how to give a right answer.

Meno. True.

Socrates. But those very opinions, which you acknowledge to be his own, were in him all the time: were they not?

Meno. They were.

Socrates. In a man therefore, who is ignorant, there

are true opinions concerning those very things of which he is ignorant.

Meno. It appears there are.

Socrates. Those opinions then are stirred up afresh in the mind of that boy, as fancies are in dreaming. And if he should frequently be questioned of these things, and by many different persons, you may be assured he will at length know them with as much certainty as any man.

Meno. Indeed, it seems so.

Socrates. Will he not then know them without being taught them, having only been asked questions, and recovering of himself from within himself his lost knowledge?

Meno. He will.

Socrates. But our recovery of knowledge from within ourselves, is not this what we call reminiscence?

Meno. Without doubt.

Socrates. And this knowledge, which he now has, must he not at some time or other have acquired it, or else have always been possessed of it?

Meno. Certainly.

Socrates. Now if he was always possessed of it, he was always a person of knowledge. But if at any time he first received it, was it not in this present life? unless some person has taught him the science of geometry. For he will make his answers with no less certainty in every part of geometry, and indeed in all the other mathematical sciences. Is there any one, then, who has taught the boy all this? I ask you; because you ought to know, since he was born and bred up in your family.

Meno. I am certain that no person has ever taught him those sciences.

Socrates. And yet he entertains those opinions, which he has just now declared: does he not?

Meno. It appears, Socrates, that he must.

Socrates. If then he had this knowledge within him, 86
not having acquired it in this present life, it is plain that in some other time he had learnt it and actually possessed it.

Meno. It appears so.

Socrates. And was not that time then, when he was not a man?

Meno. Certainly.

Socrates. If true opinions then are in him, at both these times, the time when he is, and the time when he is not a man; opinions which, awakened and roused by questions, rise up into science; must not his soul be well furnished with this discipline throughout all ages? for it is plain, that in every age he either is, or is not a man.

Meno. In all appearance it must be so.

Soc. If the truth of things therefore is always in the soul, the soul should be immortal. So that whatever you happen now not to know, that is, not to remember, you ought to undertake with confidence to seek within yourself, and recall it to your mind.

Meno. You seem to me, Socrates, somehow or other to speak rightly.

Socrates. As for my own part, Meno, I would not contend very strenuously for the truth of my argument in other respects; but that in thinking it our duty to seek after the knowledge of things we are at present ignorant of, we should become better men, more manly, and less idle, than if we suppose it not possible for us to find out, nor our duty to inquire into, what we know not; this I would, if I was able, strongly, both by word and deed, maintain.

Meno. In this also, Socrates, you seem to me to say well.

Socrates. Since then we are agreed in this point, that what a man knows not, he ought to inquire after and seek to know, are you willing that we attempt jointly to inquire into the nature of virtue?

Meno. By all means, willing. Not but that I should have most pleasure in taking into consideration, and hearing what you have to say on the question I first asked you, whether, in setting about our inquiries concerning virtue, we should consider it as a thing that may be taught, or as being by nature with those who have it, or as attainable by some other means, and what they are.

Socrates. Were I to govern not only myself, Meno, but you too, we would not consider whether virtue could be taught or not, before we had inquired, in the first place, what virtue was. But since you, without so much as attempting to govern yourself, for fear (I suppose) of being less free and less a gentleman, undertake however to govern me, and actually do govern me, I shall yield to you. For indeed how can I help myself? or what is to be done without it? We are to consider then, it seems, what belongs to some certain thing, whilst yet we know not what the thing is. But if you still persist, however relax a little the strictness of your command, and suffer the question, whether virtue can be taught a man, or how otherwise it is attained, to be considered hypothetically. By hypothetically I mean in the same manner as geometricians often treat a question, for instance; when they are asked concerning some geometrical figure, whether it is possible for such a particular triangle to be inscribed in such a particular circle. A geometrician would answer,—I know not 87
as yet, of what kind this triangle is. But I can make a supposition, which I think may be of use in answering your question,——this;———Supposing the triangle be of such a kind, as that a circle being drawn about a given side of it, the whole space of the triangle be included within the circular space described around it, the consequence will then be one thing; but quite another consequence will follow, if it cannot be so included. Laying down therefore these two hypotheses distinctly, I can tell you what will follow, in each of these cases, as to the inscribing that triangle within the circle, whether it be impossible or possible. Now the same way shall we take in our inquiry concerning virtue: since we know not, either what it is, or what is to be attributed to it, we shall lay down an hypothesis concerning it; and, on the footing of that hypothesis, shall consider whether it is to be taught or not. Let us then state the question thus: Supposing virtue to be in that order of things which belongs to the soul, is virtue, on this hypothesis, to be taught, or not to be taught? In the first place, it is either a different kind of thing from knowledge, or a thing of the same kind with

knowledge: and on each of these hypotheses let us inquire, whether virtue is or is not to be taught, or (as we lately expressed it) recalled to mind; for whichever of these expressions we use, let it make no difference to us. The question is then, whether virtue is to be taught. Now is it not evident to every one, that man is taught no other thing than knowledge?

Meno. To me it seems so.

Socrates. If virtue, therefore, be a certain kind of knowledge, it is evident that virtue is to be taught.

Meno. Undoubtedly.

Socrates. We have quickly then dispatched this part of the inquiry; and are fairly come to this conclusion, that if virtue be a thing of the same kind with knowledge, it is to be taught; otherwise not.

Meno. Very true.

Socrates. Next after this, it seems, that we should consider whether virtue be knowledge or of a kind different from knowledge.

Meno. We ought, I think, in the next place to consider this.

Socrates. Well now; shall we suppose that virtue is a thing which is good; and shall we abide by this hypothesis, laying it down for certain that virtue is something good?

Meno. By all means.

Socrates. Now if there be also any other good separated from knowledge, then perhaps virtue may not be a certain kind of knowledge. But if there be no sort of good which is not comprehended under knowledge, then a suspicion that virtue was knoweldge of a certain kind would be a just suspicion.

Meno. What you say is true.

Socrates. But further; is it not through virtue that we are good?

Meno. It is.

Socrates. And if good, then advantageous. For all things that are good are advantageous: are they not?

Meno. They are.

Socrates. Virtue then is a thing advantageous too.

Meno. It follows of necessity from what we just now granted.

Socrates. Now let us consider what sort of things those are which profit and are advantageous to us; enumerating the particulars: health, we all say, and strength, and beauty, and riches. These things and others of like kind we call advantageous: do we not?

Meno. We do.

Socrates. And say we not, that these very things are 88
sometimes hurtful to us? or do you pronounce otherwise?

Meno. No otherwise; I say the same.

Socrates. Consider now, what is the leading cause when any of these things profit us; and what when they hurt us. Is it not, when right use presides in the management of them, that they profit us, and when right use is wanting, that they hurt us?

Meno. Certainly so.

Socrates. Further then, let us consider things belonging to the soul. Do you admit that temperance is something in the soul; and so of justice, and fortitude, and docility, and memory, and magnanimity, and all things of like kind?

Meno. I do.

Socrates. Now consider such of these things, as you think not to consist in knowledge, but to be of a kind different from knowledge. Do not these procure us sometimes hurt, and sometimes advantage? for instance, fortitude; unless fortitude is not where prudence is wanting: let our instance then be boldness. When a man is bold without reason or understanding, does he not incur mischief? And when he is bold rationally and wisely, does he not gain advantage?

Meno. It is true.

Socrates. Is it not true of temperance also, and docility, that to a man who has learnt and is provided with them, if his soul at the same time be fraught with understanding, they are advantageous; but, if he wants understanding, they are hurtful?

Meno. Most undoubtedly.

Socrates. In a word, all the abilities of the soul,

whether they be of the active kind or of the passive, under the conduct of prudence, do they not tend to happiness; but managed with imprudence, do they not produce the contrary effect?

Meno. It is probable they do.

Socrates. If virtue then be one of those things belonging to the soul, and if it be of necessity, as you say, always advantageous, virtue must be prudence: for we see, that all other things belonging to the soul are of themselves neither advantageous nor hurtful; but let there be added to them imprudence or prudence, and they thus become either hurtful or advantageous. Now according to this reasoning, virtue being always advantageous, must be some kind of prudence.

Meno. To me it seems so.

Socrates. Now then as to those other things, which we said just now were sometimes beneficial and sometimes hurtful, riches, and the rest of external goods; I ask whether or no as prudence, presiding in the soul, and governing her other powers and possessions, applies them to our advantage; and as imprudence, having the lead, turns them all to mischief; whether in the same manner the soul, rightly using and administering those outward things, employs them for our benefit, but by a wrong use renders them prejudicial and pernicious?

Meno. Most certainly.

Socrates. And are not things administered and used rightly by a soul possessed of prudence; but amiss and ill by a soul possessed with folly?

Meno. They are.

Socrates. Thus then we may pronounce it to hold good universally: to man all external things depend on his soul; and all things belonging to the soul itself depend on prudence for their being good and beneficial
89 to him. Now it follows from this reasoning, that prudence is always advantageous. But did we not just now say the same of virtue too?

Meno. True.

Socrates. We conclude, therefore, that prudence is virtue; either the whole of virtue, or some part at least.

Meno. What has been said seems to me, Socrates, to have been well said.

Socrates. If then it be so, the good are not good by nature.

Meno. It seems to me, they are not.

Socrates. For then, this too would follow. If the good were good by nature we should have, somewhere or other, persons who knew which of our youth were good and virtuous in their natures; and these, when they had discovered them to us, we should take and guard in the citadel, putting our seal on them more carefully than we should on gold; that no person might corrupt them, and that when they arrived at the age of manhood, they might become useful to the state.

Meno. It is likely, Socrates, that in that case this would be done.

Socrates. Since the good, therefore, are not good by nature, whether are they good by teaching or not?

Meno. I think it now necessary to hold this in the affirmative. And it is plain, Socrates, that if virtue be knowledge, according to our hypothesis before, then it may be taught.

Socrates. Perhaps so, by Jove. But I fear we did amiss in admitting that hypothesis.

Meno. And yet very lately it seemed to be maintained fairly.

Socrates. But I suspect, it ought not only to have lately seemed to be maintained fairly, but to seem so at present, and hereafter too, if there be anything in it sound or faultless.

Meno. What is the matter now? in what respect do you find fault with it? and why doubt of its being true, that virtue is a kind of knowledge?

Socrates. I will tell you, Meno. That virtue is to be taught, supposing it to be a science, or some kind of knowledge, this position of ours I call not into question, nor have any doubt of its being true. But consider whether I appear not to have reason for doubting the truth of the supposition, that virtue is a kind of knowledge. For answer me to this question; whatever is taught, I speak not of virtue only, but of every other

subject of discipline or teaching, must there not be of necessity both teachers of it and scholars?

Meno. I think there must.

Socrates. That thing, therefore, on the contrary, of which there are neither teachers nor scholars to be found, should we not think rightly, in thinking it probable that it is not the subject of teaching?

Meno. True. But do you really think that no masters are to be found who teach virtue?

Socrates. Though I have often sought about, and inquired if there were any teachers of virtue, with my utmost endeavours I cannot find any. And yet I invite any persons to join me in the search, especially such as I might presume to have the most experience in that affair. And just now, Meno, in happy time, is this man Anytus sat down by us, who may be a party in our inquiry. And it should seem reasonable for us to make him a party:
90 for, in the first place, he is the son of the wealthy and the wise Anthemion, a man who is become rich, not by accident, nor yet by legacy, as he has done to whom the riches of Polycrates are now of late devolved, Ismenias of Thebes, but having acquired his wealth through his own wisdom and industry; and then as to his other good qualities, he is a citizen who is thought neither contemptuous and insolent, nor ostentatious and giving trouble to all about him, but behaves decently and conducts himself like a modest and frugal man. And besides all this, he has educated and instructed his son here excellently well, in the opinion of the Athenian multitude; for they elect him to the highest offices in the state. Such men it is right to make of our party, when we are inquiring after masters who teach virtue, whether any are to be found and who they are. Join yourself therefore, Anytus, to us, to me, and Meno here, your guest at Athens, in our inquiry concerning virtue, who are the teachers of it. And consider the question thus: Suppose this Meno had an inclination to be made a good physician, and applied to us for our advice in the affair, to what masters should we send him? should we not send him to the physicians?

Anytus. By all means.

Socrates. And to make him a good currier, should we not send him to the curriers?

Anytus. To be sure.

Socrates. And in all other subjects of instruction, should we not take the same way?

Anytus. Without doubt.

Socrates. But concerning this point, let me ask you another question. In sending him to the physicians, we say we should do well, if we intended the making him a good physician. Now when we say this, do we not mean, that we should act with prudence in sending him, not to any one who profess not the art of healing, but to those who make it their profession; and who, besides, are paid for teaching it to others; and thus, by this very acceptance of pay, take upon themselves to teach any one who is willing to come and learn; I ask you whether it is not from these considerations that we should do well in sending him to the physicians?

Anytus. I answer, yes.

Socrates. In the learning music too, and every other art, are not the same considerations just? Surely it is great want of understanding in us, if we are desirous of having some person taught music, not to choose for his masters such as profess the teaching of the art, and the taking of money too for their teaching; but, instead of this, to give trouble to other people, expecting him to learn from those who do not pretend to be teachers, and have not one scholar in that learning in which we expect our student should be by them instructed. Think you not that such an expectation would be very unreasonable?

Anytus. I do, by Jupiter; and a great sign of ignorance too, besides.

Socrates. You say well. Now then you have an opportunity of considering together with me, and giving your advice about this guest of yours, Meno here. For 91
he has often told me long ago, Anytus, that he wished to acquire that wisdom and virtue, through which men govern well both their families and their commonwealth; through which also they behave respectfully to their parents; and know how to entertain both their country-

men and foreigners, and what presents to make them at their departure, in such a manner as becomes a good man. Were we then to recommend to him any persons from whom he might learn this virtue, consider whom we should do right in recommending. Is it not clear that, agreeably to what we have just now said in other cases, they would be those persons who profess to be teachers of virtue, and publicly through all Greece offer themselves to teach it to any one who desires to learn; fixing the price of this their teaching, and demanding it as their just fee

Anytus. And what persons, Socrates, do you mean?

Socrates. You cannot be ignorant that I speak of those who are called sophists.

Anytus. O Hercules! speak not so shamefully, Socrates. May none of my relations, friends, or acquaintance, fellow-citizens, or foreign guests, ever be seized with such a madness as to go and be spoiled by those men. For the bane and corruption those men are of all who follow them.

Socrates. How say you, Anytus? Are these the only men among those who profess the knowledge of something beneficial to human kind, so widely different from all the rest, as not only not to improve and make better what is put into their hands as the others do, but on the contrary to corrupt and spoil it? and do they think fit openly to demand fees to be paid them for so doing? I cannot tell how I should give credit to this account of yours. For I know one man in particular, Protagoras, to have acquired singly more riches from having this wisdom, than Phidias has from his works so celebrated for their beauty, together with any ten other statuaries besides. It is a prodigy what you tell me; when the menders of old shoes and of old clothes could not escape a month from being publicly known, if they returned the clothes or shoes in a worse condition than they received them; but doing so would be soon reduced to starving; yet, that Protagoras should corrupt and spoil his followers, and send them home worse men than when they first came to him, without being discovered by all Greece, and this for above forty years. For I think he

was near seventy years of age when he died, after having spent forty of them in the practice of his profession. And during all that time he maintained a high reputation, which continues even to this day. And not only Protagoras met with this success, but very many 92
others: some of whom were prior to him in time, and some flourish at present. Now shall we suppose that they deceived and corrupted the youth, as you say they did, knowingly? or shall we suppose they did so unconscious of it to themselves? Shall we deem them to be so much out of their senses, such men, who are said by some to be the wisest of mankind?

Anytus. They are far from being out of their senses, Socrates: rather so are those of the youth, who give them money for corrupting them; and still more so than these youths are their relations in committing them to the guidance of such men; but most of all so are those cities which suffer such men to come in amongst them, and drive not away and banish every man, whether foreigner or citizen, who sets up in any such profession.

Socrates. Has any of the sophists done you any injury, Anytus? or why else are you so angry with them?

Anytus. I have never, by Jupiter, conversed with one of them myself; nor would I suffer so to do any person who belonged to me.

Socrates. You have no experience at all then of those men.

Anytus. And never desire to have any.

Socrates. How then should you know if there is any good or any harm in their teaching, when you have no experience of it at all?

Anytus. Easily enough. For I know what sort of fellows they are, whether I have had any experience or not of them and of their teaching.

Socrates. You have the gift of divination perhaps, Anytus. For how otherwise you could know what they are, according to your own account, I should much wonder. But we were not inquiring to what persons Meno might go and be made a bad man. As to these, if you will, let them be the sophists. But now tell us

of those others: and do an act of kindness to this hereditary friend of yours, in directing him to what persons in this great city he may go and be made eminent in that virtue which I gave you a description of just now.

Anytus. But why did not you direct him to such persons yourself?

Socrates. What persons I had imagined were the teachers of these duties I have told you. But I happen to have said nothing to the purpose, as you inform me.

Anytus. There is some truth however in that perhaps.

Socrates. Now, therefore, do you in your turn tell him to whom of the Athenians he should go. Name any one you choose.

Anytus. What occasion has he to hear any one man's name? For of the men of honour and virtue among the Athenians, there is not one, the first he meets with, who would not make him a better man than the sophists would, if he will but hearken and be observant.

Socrates. But did these men of honour and virtue become such spontaneously, and without having learnt from any man to be what they are? and are they able
93 to teach others what they were never taught themselves?

Anytus. They, I presume, learn from those who went before them, men of like honour and virtue. Or think you not that our city has produced many excellent men?

Socrates. I think, Anytus, that in this city there are men excellent in political affairs, and that there have been others no less excellent before them. But were they good teachers of that political excellence? For it is this which happens to be the subject of our present debate: not whether men of honour and virtue are to be found at present in this city or not; nor whether such were to be found here formerly: but whether virtue is to be taught or not. This we have been of a long time considering and inquiring; and in prosecuting the inquiry, we are fallen upon this question, whether those excellent men, either of these or of former days, knew how to impart, or to deliver down to others, that virtue in which they themselves are so excellent; or whether it be impossible for man to deliver down or to impart

virtue, and for men to receive it one from another. This it is which we have been long examining, I and Meno, Consider the question now in this manner, on the footing of your own argument. Would you not say that Themistocles was a man of virtue?

Anytus. I would; and that he was so the most of all men too.

Socrates. And would you not then say, that if ever any man could teach his own virtue to another, Themistocles was a good teacher?

Anytus. I suppose he was, had he had a mind to teach.

Socrates. But do you suppose that he had no mind to have some others made men of honour and virtue, and especially his own son? or do you imagine that he maliciously and designedly withheld from him that virtue in which he himself was excellent? Did you never hear that Themistocles taught his son Cleophantus to be an excellent horseman? and that his son attained to such a pitch of excellence, that he would keep himself for a long time standing upright upon horses in full speed, and in this situation would throw his javelin; and performed many other surprising feats of horsemanship, in which his father had him instructed; and that he made him skilled in all other accomplishments, such as depend on having had good masters? Have you heard all this from elderly people who remember it?

Anytus. I have.

Socrates. The disposition of his son therefore is not to be found fault with as untowardly and unteachable?

Anytus. Perhaps it is not.

Socrates. But what say you to this? That Cleophantus the son of Themistocles was a skilful and an excellent man in the same way as his father was, have you ever heard this from any man, either young or old?

Anytus. No, truly.

Socrates. Do we imagine then that he chose to breed him up in such studies and exercises as he did; and yet, in that wisdom and skill in which he himself excelled, to make him, his own son, not at all a better man than his neighbours, if virtue could be taught?

Anytus. That indeed is, perhaps, not to be supposed.

Socrates. Such a teacher of virtue now is this teacher of yours, a man whom you yourself acknowledge to have been one of the best men of the last age. And now let us consider another, Aristides, the son of
94 Lysimachus. Do you not agree that he was a man of virtue?

Anytus. I do entirely.

Socrates. And did he not give his son Lysimachus the best education to be had at Athens, so far as depended on masters and teachers? and do you think he has made him a better man than common? You have had some acquaintance with him, and you see what sort of a man he is. Let another instance, if you please, be Pericles, a man so magnanimously wise. You know that he bred up two sons, Paralus and Xanthippus.

Anytus. I do.

Socrates. These, as you know also, he taught horsemanship so as to make them equal in that skill to any of the Athenians. In music too, and gymnastic, and all other accomplishments which depend on art, he instructed them so well that none excelled them. But had he no mind to make them good men? I believe he wanted not inclination so to do; but I suspect it to be impossible to teach virtue. And that you may not imagine that I speak only of a few, and those of the meanest birth among the Athenians, and such as wanted abilities for such an affair, consider that Thucydides also bred up two sons, Melesias and Stephanus, giving them a good education in all other respects, and particularly in the exercise of wrestling, in which they excelled all their countrymen. For he had one of his sons instructed by Xanthius, the other by Eudorus; and these two masters, in the art of wrestling, were thought to be the best of the age. Do you not remember this?

Anytus. I remember that I have heard so.

Socrates. Is it not evident then, that he would never have taught his children those things, the teaching of which must have put him to expense, and, at the same time, have neglected what would have cost him nothing, the teaching them to be good men, if such a thing was

possible to be taught? But Thucydides, perhaps it may be imagined, was a mean inconsiderable person, who had but few friends among the Athenians or their allies. It was not so. For he was of a noble house, and had great power in Athens, and much weight in the other Grecian states. So that, if his sons could have made good men by teaching, he might easily have found out some person to make them so, either one of his own countrymen, or a foreigner, if he himself wanted leisure, on account of his public employments and his administration of the state. But I fear, friend Anytus, that virtue is a thing impossible to be taught.

Anytus. You seem to me, Socrates, to be ready at abuse, and to speak ill of others with great facility. But I would advise you, if you choose to hearken to me, to be more cautious, and to take care of yourself. For that, in other cities too, it is perhaps an easy matter to do a man a mischief, as well as a piece of service; but here, at Athens, it is so more especially; and, if I 95
mistake not, you are sensible of it yourself.

Socrates. Anytus seems to me to be angry, Meno. And I am not at all surprised at it. For, in the first place, he supposes that I spoke ill of those persons I mentioned: and then he takes himself to be such another as they were. Now if this man should ever come to know what it is to speak ill of others, he will cease to be angry: but at present he is ignorant of it. Do you therefore answer now, and tell me; are there not amongst us men of honour and virtue?

Meno. Certainly there are.

Socrates. But are these men willing to offer themselves to the youth to teach them virtue? do they profess the teaching of it? or do they agree that virtue is a thing which can be taught?

Meno. No, by Jupiter, Socrates, they do not. For you may hear them sometimes maintaining that it may be taught, at other times that it cannot be taught.

Socrates. Shall we say then that these men are teachers of virtue, when they have not settled so much as this point, whether virtue can be taught or not?

Meno. I should think we should not, Socrates.

Socrates. Well; but what say you of those sophists, the only persons who profess to teach virtue, think you that they are the teachers?

Meno. It is for this, O Socrates, that I especially admire Gorgias; for that one shall never hear him making any such professions, or taking upon himself an office of that kind. On the contrary, he laughs at those others whenever he hears them engaging to teach men to be virtuous; and thinks it the office of a sophist only to make men great orators and powerful in speaking.

Socrates. You do not think then that the sophists neither are the teachers of virtue?

Meno. I know not what to say, Socrates, to this point. They have the same effect on me as they have on most other people; sometimes I think they are, and sometimes that they are not.

Socrates. Do you know, that not only yourself and those others, who are versed in civil affairs, sometimes think that virtue is acquired through teaching, and sometimes that it is not; do you know that Theognis the poet is of the same mind, and speaks exactly in the same manner?

Meno. In what verses of his?

Socrates. In his Elegiacs; where he says,

> Mix evermore with men, through virtue, great;
> And near to theirs be placed thy happy seat:
> Still be companion of their board and bowl,
> And still to what delights them bend thy soul,
> For good through sweet contagion shall be caught,
> And virtue be by living manners taught.
> But converse of bad men is folly's school;
> Where sense, taught backward, sinks into a fool.

Do you perceive that in these verses he speaks of virtue as if it might be acquired through teaching?

Meno. It appears so to me.

Socrates. And yet in other verses a little farther on he says,

> To fools their wisdom could the wise impart;
> Could understanding be infus'd by art;
> Or could right thought into the mind be driv'n;
> For this how oft would great rewards be giv'n?

That is, to those men who were complete masters in this skill. And again he says,

> Ne'er did bad son from virtuous father rise,
> If duly nurtur'd by his precepts wise.
> But whate'er culture careful we bestow,
> Ne'er in bad soil can seed of virtue grow. 96

Do you observe, that in speaking again upon the same subject, he contradicts himself, and says the very reverse of what he had said before?

Meno. So it appears.

Socrates. Can you tell me now of any other thing, where they who profess to be teachers are held by all men to be so far from teaching it to others, as to be ignorant of it themselves, and to have no merit in that very thing which they pretend to teach; and where those who are by all men allowed to be excellent themselves, sometimes say it may be taught, and sometimes that it cannot? Those who are so unsettled and perplexed about any subject whatever, would you say that they are the proper masters and teachers of it?

Meno. By Jupiter, not I.

Socrates. If then neither the sophists, nor those who are themselves excellent men, are teachers of virtue, it is plain there can be no others beside.

Meno. I think there can be none.

Socrates. And if no teachers, then no scholars neither.

Meno. I think what you say is true.

Socrates. But we agreed before, that a thing in which neither teachers of it nor scholars are to be found, is not the subject of teaching, and cannot be taught.

Meno. We were agreed in this.

Socrates. Of virtue now there appear nowhere any teachers.

Meno. Very true.

Socrates. And if no teachers of it, then no scholars in it neither.

Meno. It appears so.

Socrates. Virtue therefore must be a thing which cannot be taught.

Meno. It seems so, if we have considered the matter

rightly. And hence, Socrates, I am led to wonder, whether any men really good are ever to be found or not; and if there are, by what means they became such.

Socrates. We are in danger, O Meno! of being found, you and I, both of us, very insufficient reasoners on the point in question; and you not to have been fully instructed by Gorgias, nor I by Prodicus. Above all things therefore ought we to apply our minds to ourselves; and to search out a person who by some certain means would make us better men. I say this with regard to the inquiry now before us; in which we have been so foolish as not to consider, that it is not under the conduct of science that the affairs of men are administered rightly and well; or, if we should not choose to grant that, at least that it is not under the conduct of science only, but of some other thing also which is different from science; and perhaps the knowledge of the means by which men become good hath escaped us.

Meno. How so, Socrates?

Socrates. I will tell you how. That those men who are good and virtuous must also be advantageous to us
97 we have agreed rightly; and that it is impossible it should be otherwise. Is not this true?

Meno. Certainly.

Socrates. And that they are advantageous to us on this account, because they conduct our affairs rightly, should we not do well in admitting this?

Meno. Without doubt.

Socrates. But we seem not to have done well in granting, that unless a man be prudent, it is not possible for him to conduct affairs rightly.

Meno. What mean you now by the word rightly?

Socrates. I will tell you what I mean. If a man who knew the way to Larissa, or wherever else you please, were to walk at the head of others whom he had undertaken to conduct thither, would he not conduct them well and rightly?

Meno. Without doubt.

Socrates. And how would it be were a man to undertake this who had only a right opinion about the way,

but had never gone thither himself, nor had any certain knowledge of the way, would not he also conduct them rightly?

Meno. To be sure.

Socrates. And so long as he had anyhow a right opinion of the way, which the other man knew with certainty, he would not in the least be a worse guide, though only surmising justly, and not knowing clearly, than the other with all his perfect knowledge?

Meno. Not at all worse.

Socrates. Right opinion, therefore, with regard to right action, is not at all a worse guide than science or perfect knowledge. And this it is which we omitted just now in considering the nature of virtue; when we said that prudence only or knowledge led to right action; it is this, right opinion.

Meno. It seems so.

Socrates. Right opinion therefore is not at all of less advantage to man than certain knowledge.

Meno. In this respect, however, Socrates, it is; in that he who has a perfect knowledge of his end, would always attain it; but the man who had only a right opinion of it, sometimes would attain to it, and sometimes would not.

Socrates. How say you? would not the man, who had a right opinion of it, always attain to it, so long as he entertained that right opinion?

Meno. It appears to me that he must. And therefore I wonder, Socrates, this being the case, on what account it is that science is so much more valuable than right opinion; and indeed in what respect it is that they differ at all one from the other.

Socrates. Do you know now why you wonder? or shall I tell you?

Meno. By all means tell me.

Socrates. It is because you never considered attentively those images made by Dædalus. But perhaps you have none of them in your country.

Meno. With what view is it now that you speak of these images?

Socrates. Because these, if they are not fastened, run

away from us, and become fugitives; but if they are fastened, they abide by us.

Meno. Well; and what then?

Socrates. To have in one's possession any of these works of his loose and unfastened, is like to the being master of a runaway slave, a matter of little value, because not permanent: but when fastened and secured, they are things of great value; for indeed they are works of great beauty. But you ask, with what view it is that I speak of these images. I answer,—It is with a view to true opinions. For true opinions also, so long as they abide by us, are valuable goods, and procure for
98 us all good things: but they are not disposed to abide with us a long time; for they soon slip away out of our souls, and become fugitives. Hence are they of small value to a man, until he has fastened and bound them down, by deducing them rationally from their cause. And this, my friend Meno, is reminiscence, as we before agreed. But when they are thus bound and fastened, in the first place they become truly known, and in consequence of this they become stable and abide with us. Now it is on this very account that science is a thing more valuable than right opinion; and in this respect it is they differ, in that the parts of science only are fastened one to another, and bound down together.

Meno. By Jupiter, Socrates, they are similar to some such things as those to which you resemble them.

Socrates. Nay, for my part, I speak thus not from knowledge; but only from conjecture. But that right opinion and science are two different things, this, as it appears to me, I do not merely imagine or conjecture. For if I were to profess the knowledge of any things whatever (and there are but a few things which I could profess to know), this I would set down for one of them.

Meno. You are entirely right, Socrates.

Socrates. Well; and am I not right in this also, that true opinion, having the conduct of any work or action whatever, executes her office full as well as science?

Meno. In this too I think you are in the right.

Socrates. Right opinion, therefore, is a thing not at all inferior to science, nor less beneficial with regard to

the execution of any work, or the performance of any action; nor is the man, who has right opinions, inferior (in this respect) to the man of science.

Meno. Very true.

Socrates. And we agreed before, that a good man was beneficial or advantageous to others.

Meno. We did.

Socrates. Since, therefore, it is not through science only that men have been good and beneficial to their country (if any such men there may have been), but also by means of right opinion; and since neither of these is with men by nature, neither science nor right opinion; or do you think that either of them comes by nature?

Meno. Not I.

Socrates. Since, then, they are not by nature, by nature neither is it that men could have been good and virtuous.

Meno. Certainly not.

Socrates. Seeing now, that virtue comes not by nature, we should, in the next place, after this consider if it comes through teaching.

Meno. To be sure we should.

Socrates. Did it not appear to us both, that if virtue was wisdom, then it came through teaching?

Meno. It did.

Socrates. And that if virtue came through teaching, then virtue would be wisdom?

Meno. Very true.

Socrates. And that if there were any teachers of virtue, virtue would in that case be a thing that came through teaching; otherwise not?

Meno. Just so.

Socrates. But we have agreed that there were no teachers of it.

Meno. True.

Socrates. We are agreed, therefore, that virtue comes not through teaching; and that virtue is not wisdom.

Meno. Certainly so.

Socrates. But we agreed besides, that virtue was something good.

Meno. True.

Socrates. And that whatever conducted affairs rightly was a thing good and serviceable to us.

Meno. We did clearly.

99 *Socrates.* And that affairs are conducted rightly by these two things only, true opinion and science; possessed of either of which two, a man makes a good leader and guide. Whatever comes from fortune is not the effect of human conduct. But so far as man has to do in conducting rightly, it is only through one of these means, true opinion and science.

Meno. I think so.

Socrates. Now since virtue comes not through teaching, it is not the effect of science.

Meno. It appears that it is not.

Socrates. Of the two only things then, which are good and serviceable to man's right conduct, we have thrown one out of the question; having agreed that science is not the thing through which civil affairs are administered and conducted rightly.

Meno. I think it is not.

Socrates. Not therefore through any wisdom, nor as being wise, did such men govern in the state; such as Themistocles, and the rest, whom Anytus here just now recounted. And for this very reason they were not capable of making others to be such men as themselves; because it was not science that made them what they were.

Meno. The case, O Socrates, seems to be as you represent it.

Socrates. If then it is not science, it follows that it must be the other thing which remains of the two, namely, right opinion, through which public affairs are administered rightly by our statesmen and politicians; men who, in point of wisdom, are not at all superior to the oracle singers and divine prophets. For these also utter many true sayings, but have no real knowledge of any one thing they utter.

Meno. I suspect this to be the case.

Socrates. Now do not those men, O Meno, deserve the character of divine men, who either speak or act aright in many things of great importance, without any intel-

lectual knowledge of the subjects concerning which they speak or act?

Meno. By all means do they.

Socrates. Rightly then should we call those men divine, whom we just now mentioned, the oracle singers and the prophets, and all who are inspired by the Muses. Nor at all less divine men than these should we say that the politicians are, no less enthusiasts, inspired divinely, and possessed by the Divinity, when in their speeches they direct aright many and great affairs, without any real knowledge of the subjects they are speaking of.

Meno. Certainly we should.

Socrates. And accordingly the women, you know, Meno, call men of virtue by the name of divine men. And the Lacedæmonians, when they celebrate with encomiums any man of virtue, are used to say of him that he is a divine man.

Meno. And they appear, O Socrates, to speak justly too. And yet, perhaps, Anytus here is offended at what you say.

Socrates. I give myself no manner of concern about it. With him, Meno, we shall have some discourse at another time. But if we, at this time, during all this conversation, have pursued our inquiries and reasonings aright, virtue can neither come by nature, nor yet through teaching; but to those with whom it is, it must come by a divine portion or allotment, without the intelligence or true knowledge of it; unless amongst the 100
politicians there should be found some person capable of making another man a good politician. But if there should, he might almost be said to be such a one amongst the living, as Homer tells us that Teresias is amongst the dead; where, speaking of him and of the rest who are in Hades, he says,

> Fill'd is he only with discerning mind;
> The rest flit, empty shadows, dark and blind.

Exactly the same pre-eminence hath such a man; being as it were the truth and substance of things, compared with shadows, in respect of virtue.

Meno. What you say, O Socrates, seems to me to be in the highest degree just.

Socrates. From this reasoning, then, Meno, it appears to us, that such as are possessed of virtue, have it as a divine portion or allotment to them. But on this point we shall then arrive at certainty, when, previous to our inquiries by what means it is that virtue comes to men, we set about searching first, what the essence is of virtue.——But it is now time for me to go somewhere else. And do you, since you are persuaded yourself of the truth of those conclusions, the result of our inquiries, persuade your friend Anytus to believe them also. For he may thus be softened and become milder; and you, by thus persuading him, may possibly do a piece of service to your country.

PHÆDO,

OR

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

First Echecrates, Phædo. St.
Then Socrates, Apollodorus, Cebes, Simmias and Crito. I.

Ech. WERE you personally present, Phædo, with Socrates on that day when he drank the poison in prison? or did you hear an account of it from some one else? p. 57

Phæd. I was there myself, Echecrates.

Ech. What then did he say before his death? and how did he die? for I should be glad to hear: for scarcely any citizen of Phlius ever visits Athens now, nor has any stranger for a long time come from thence, who was able to give us a clear account of the particulars, except that he died from drinking poison; but he was unable to tell us any thing more.

Phæd. And did you not hear about the trial how it went off? 58

Ech. Yes; some one told me this; and I wondered, that as it took place so long ago, he appears to have died long afterwards. What was the reason of this, Phædo?

Phæd. An accidental circumstance happened in his favour, Echecrates: for the poop of the ship which the Athenians send to Delos, chanced to be crowned on the day before the trial.

Ech. But what is this ship?

Phæd. It is the ship, as the Athenians say, in which Theseus formerly conveyed the fourteen boys and girls to Crete, and saved both them and himself. They, therefore, made a vow to Apollo on that occasion, as it is said, that if they were saved they would every year

despatch a solemn embassy to Delos; which from that time to the present, they send yearly to the god. When they begin the preparations for this solemn embassy, they have a law that the city shall be purified during this period, and that no public execution shall take place until the ship has reached Delos, and returned to Athens: and this occasionally takes a long time, when the winds happen to impede their passage. The commencement of the embassy is when the priest of Apollo has crowned the poop of the ship. And this was done, as I said, on the day before the trial: on this account Socrates had a long interval in prison between the trial and his death.

Ech. And what, Phædo, were the circumstances of his death? what was said and done? and who of his friends were with him? or would not the magistrates allow them to be present, but did he die destitute of friends?

Phæd. By no means; but some, indeed several, were present.

Ech. Take the trouble, then, to relate to me all the particulars as clearly as you can, unless you have any pressing business.

Phæd. I am at leisure, and will endeavour to give you a full account: for to call Socrates to mind, whether speaking myself or listening to some one else, is always most delightful to me.

Ech. And indeed, Phædo, you have others to listen to you who are of the same mind. However, endeavour to relate every thing as accurately as you can.

Phæd. I was indeed wonderfully affected by being present, for I was not impressed with a feeling of pity, like one present at the death of a friend; for the man appeared to me to be happy, Echecrates, both from his manner and discourse, so fearlessly and nobly did he meet his death: so much so, that it occurred to me, that in going to Hades he was not going without a divine destiny, but that when he arrived there he would
59 be happy, if any one ever was. For this reason I was entirely uninfluenced by any feeling of pity, as would seem likely to be the case with one present on so mourn-

ful an occasion; nor was I affected by pleasure from being engaged in philosophical discussions, as was our custom; for our conversation was of that kind. But an altogether unaccountable feeling possessed me, a kind of unusual mixture compounded of pleasure and pain together, when I considered that he was immediately about to die. And all of us who were present were affected in much the same manner, at one time laughing, at another weeping, one of us especially, Apollodorus, for you know the man and his manner.

Ech. How should I not?

Phæd. He, then, was entirely overcome by these emotions; and I, too, was troubled, as well as the others.

Ech. But who were present, Phædo?

Phæd. Of his fellow-countrymen, this Apollodorus was present, and Critobolus, and his father Crito, moreover Hermogenes, Epigenes, Æschines, and Antisthenes; Ctesippus the Pæanian, Menexenus, and some other of his countrymen were also there: Plato I think was sick.

Ech. Were any strangers present?

Phæd. Yes: Simmias the Theban, Cebes, and Phædondes: and from Megara, Euclides and Terpsion.

Ech. But what! were not Aristippus and Cleombrotus present?

Phæd. No: for they were said to be at Ægina.

Ech. Was any one else there?

Phæd. I think that these were nearly all who were present.

Ech. Well now: what do you say was the subject of conversation?

Phæd. I will endeavour to relate the whole to you from the beginning. On the preceding days I and the others were constantly in the habit of visiting Socrates, meeting early in the morning at the court-house where the trial took place, for it was near the prison. Here then we waited every day till the prison was opened, conversing with each other; for it was not opened very early, but, as soon as it was opened we went in to Socrates, and usually spent the day with him. On that

occasion, however, we met earlier than usual; for on the preceding day, when we left the prison in the evening, we heard that the ship had arrived from Delos. We therefore urged each other to come as early as possible to the accustomed place; accordingly we came, and the porter, who used to admit us, coming out, told us to wait, and not enter until he called us. "For," he said, "the Eleven are now freeing Socrates from his bonds, and announcing to him that he must die to-day." But in no long time he returned, and bade us enter.

When we entered, we found Socrates just freed from
60 his bonds, and Xantippe, you know her, holding his little boy and sitting by him. As soon as Xantippe saw us, she wept aloud and said such things as women usually do on such occasions, as "Socrates, your friends will now converse with you for the last time and you with them." But Socrates, looking towards Crito, said, "Crito, let some one take her home." Upon which some of Crito's attendants led her away, wailing and beating herself.

But Socrates sitting up in bed, drew up his leg, and rubbed it with his hand, and as he rubbed it, said, "What an unaccountable thing, my friends, that seems to be, which men call pleasure; and how wonderfully is it related towards that which appears to be its contrary, pain; in that they will not both be present to a man at the same time, yet, if any one pursues and attains the one, he is almost always compelled to receive the other, as if they were both united together from one head.

"And it seems to me," he said, "that if Æsop had observed this he would have made a fable from it, how the deity, wishing to reconcile these warring principles, when he could not do so, united their heads together, and from hence whomsoever the one visits the other attends immediately after; as appears to be the case with me, since I suffered pain in my leg before from the chain, but now pleasure seems to have succeeded."

Hereupon Cebes, interrupting him, said, "By Jupiter, Socrates, you have done well in reminding me: with

respect to the poems which you made, by putting into metre those Fables of Æsop and the hymn to Apollo, several other persons asked me, and especially Evenus recently, with what design you made them after you came here, whereas before you had never made any. If, therefore, you care at all that I should be able to answer Evenus, when he asks me again, for I am sure he will do so, tell me what I must say to him."

"Tell him the truth then, Cebes," he replied, "that I did not make them from a wish to compete with him, or his poems, for I knew that this would be no easy matter; but that I might discover the meaning of certain dreams, and discharge my conscience, if this should happen to be the music which they have often ordered me to apply myself to. For they were to the following purport; often in my past life the same dream visited me, appearing at different times in different forms, yet always saying the same thing, 'Socrates,' it said, 'apply yourself to and practise music.' And I formerly supposed that it exhorted and encouraged me to continue the pursuit I was engaged in, as those who 61
cheer on racers, so that the dream encouraged me to continue the pursuit I was engaged in, namely, to apply myself to music, since philosophy is the highest music, and I was devoted to it. But now since my trial took place, and the festival of the god retarded my death, it appeared to me that, if by chance the dream so frequently enjoined me to apply myself to popular music, I ought not to disobey it but do so, for that it would be safer for me not to depart hence before I had discharged my conscience by making some poems in obedience to the dream. Thus, then, I first of all composed a hymn to the god whose festival was present, and after the god, considering that a poet, if he means to be a poet, ought to make fables and not discourses, and knowing that I was not skilled in making fables, I therefore put into verse those fables of Æsop, which were at hand, and were known to me, and which first occurred to me.

"Tell this then to Evenus, Cebes, and bid him farewell, and, if he is wise, to follow me as soon as he can.

But I depart, as it seems, to-day; for so the Athenians order."

To this Simmias said, "What is this, Socrates, which you exhort Evenus to do? for I often meet with him; and from what I know of him, I am pretty certain that he will not at all be willing to comply with your advice."

"What then," said he, "is not Evenus a philosopher?"

"To me he seems to be so," said Simmias.

"Then he will be willing," rejoined Socrates, "and so will every one who worthily engages in this study; perhaps indeed he will not commit violence on himself, for that they say is not allowable." And as he said this he let down his leg from the bed on the ground, and in this posture continued during the remainder of the discussion.

Cebes then asked him, "What do you mean, Socrates, by saying that it is not lawful to commit violence on one's-self, but that a philosopher should be willing to follow one who is dying?"

"What, Cebes, have not you and Simmias, who have conversed familiarly with Philolaus on this subject, heard?"

"Nothing very clearly, Socrates."

"I however speak only from hearsay; what then I have heard I have no scruple in telling. And perhaps it is most becoming for one who is about to travel there, to enquire and speculate about the journey thither, what kind we think it is. What else can one do in the interval before sunset?"

"Why then, Socrates, do they say that it is not allowable to kill one's-self? for I, as you asked just now, have heard both Philolaus, when he lived with us, and several others say that it was not right to do this; but I never heard any thing clear upon the subject from any one."

62 "Then you should consider it attentively," said Socrates, "for perhaps you may hear: probably, however, it will appear wonderful to you, if this alone of all other things is an universal truth, and it never

happens to a man, as is the case in all other things, that at some times and to some persons only it is better to die than to live; yet that these men for whom it is better to die—this probably will appear wonderful to you—may not without impiety do this good to themselves, but must await another benefactor."

Then Cebes, gently smiling, said, speaking in his own dialect, "Jove be witness."

"And indeed," said Socrates, "it would appear to be unreasonable, yet still perhaps it has some reason on its side. The maxim indeed given on this subject in the mystical doctrines, that we men are in a kind of prison, and that we ought not to free ourselves from it and escape, appears to me difficult to be understood, and not easy to penetrate. This, however, appears to me, Cebes, to be well said, that the gods take care of us, and that we men are one of their possessions. Does it not seem so to you?"

"It does," replied Cebes.

"Therefore," said he, "if one of your slaves were to kill himself, without your having intimated that you wished him to die, should you not be angry with him, and should you not punish him if you could?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"Perhaps then in this point of view, it is not unreasonable to assert, that a man ought not to kill himself before the deity lays him under a necessity of doing so, such as that now laid on me."

"This, indeed," said Cebes, "appears to be probable. But what you said just now, Socrates, that philosophers should be very willing to die, appears to be an absurdity, if what we said just now is agreeable to reason, that it is God who takes care of us, and that we are his property. For that the wisest men should not be grieved at leaving that service in which they who govern them are the best of all masters, namely the gods, is not consistent with reason. For surely he cannot think that he will take better care of himself when he has become free: but a foolish man might perhaps think thus, that he should fly from his master, and would not reflect that he ought not to fly from a good one, but should cling

to him as much as possible, therefore he would fly against all reason: but a man of sense would desire to be constantly with one better than himself. Thus, Socrates, the contrary of what you just now said is likely to be the case; for it becomes the wise to be grieved at dying, but the foolish to rejoice."

Socrates, on hearing this, appeared to me to be
63 pleased with the pertinacity of Cebes, and looking towards us, said, "Cebes, you see, always searches out arguments, and is not at all willing to admit at once any thing one has said."

Whereupon Simmias replied, "But indeed, Socrates, Cebes appears to me, now, to say something to the purpose: for with what design should men really wise fly from masters who are better than themselves, and so readily leave them? And Cebes appears to me to direct his argument against you, because you so easily endure to abandon both us, and those good rulers, as you yourself confess, the gods."

"You speak justly," said Socrates, "for I think you mean that I ought to make my defence to this charge, as if I were in a court of justice."

"Certainly," replied Simmias.

"Come then," said he, "I will endeavour to defend myself more successfully before you than before the judges. For," he proceeded, "Simmias and Cebes, if I did not think that I should go first of all amongst other deities who are both wise and good, and, next, amongst men who have departed this life, better than any here, I should be wrong in not grieving at death: but now be assured, I hope to go amongst good men, though I would not positively assert it, that, however, I shall go amongst gods who are perfectly good masters, be assured I can positively assert this, if I can any thing of the kind. So that, on this account, I am not so much troubled, but I entertain a good hope that something awaits those who die, and that, as was said long since, it will be far better for the good than the evil."

"What then, Socrates," said Simmias, "would you go away keeping this persuasion to yourself, or would

you impart it to us? For this good appears to me to be also common to us; and at the same time it will be an apology for you, if you can persuade us to believe what you say."

"I will endeavour to do so," he said. "But first let us attend to Crito here, and see what it is he seems to have for some time wished to say."

"What else, Socrates," said Crito, "but what he who is to give you the poison told me some time ago, that I should tell you to speak as little as possible? For he says that men become too much heated by speaking, and that nothing of this kind ought to interfere with the poison, and that otherwise, those who did so were sometimes compelled to drink two or three times."

To which Socrates replied, "Let him alone, and let him attend to his own business, and prepare to give it me twice, or, if occasion requires, even thrice."

"I was almost certain what you would say," answered Crito, "but he has been some time pestering me."

"Never mind him," he rejoined.

"But now I wish to render an account to you, my judges, of the reason why a man who has really devoted his life to philosophy, when he is about to die, appears to me, on good grounds, to have confidence, and to entertain a firm hope that the greatest good will befal 64
him in the other world, when he has departed this life. How then this comes to pass, Simmias and Cebes, I will endeavour to explain.

"For as many as rightly apply themselves to philosophy seem to have left all others in ignorance, that they aim at nothing else than to die and be dead. If this then is true, it would surely be absurd to be anxious about nothing else than this during their whole life, but, when it arrives, to be grieved at what they have been long anxious about and aimed at."

Upon this, Simmias, smiling, said, "By Jupiter, Socrates, though I am not now at all inclined to smile, you have made me do so; for I think that the multitude, if they heard this, would think it was very well said in reference to philosophers, and that our countrymen

particularly would agree with you, that true philosophers do desire death, and that they are by no means ignorant that they deserve to suffer it."

"And indeed, Simmias, they would speak the truth, except in asserting that they are not ignorant; for they are ignorant of the sense in which true philosophers desire to die, and in what sense they deserve death, and what kind of death. But," he said, "let us take leave of them, and speak to one another. Do we think that death is any thing?"

"Certainly," replied Simmias.

"Is it any thing else than the separation of the soul from the body? and is not this to die, for the body to be apart by itself separated from the soul, and for the soul to subsist apart by itself separated from the body? Is death any thing else than this?"

"No, but this," he replied.

"Consider then, my good friend, whether you are of the same opinion as me; for thus I think we shall understand better the subject we are considering. Does it appear to you to be becoming in a philosopher to be anxious about pleasures, as they are called, such as meats and drinks?"

"By no means, Socrates," said Simmias.

"But what? about the pleasures of love?"

"Not at all."

"What then? does such a man appear to you to think other bodily indulgences of value? for instance, does he seem to you to value or despise the possession of magnificent garments and sandals, and other ornaments of the body, except so far as necessity compels him to use them?"

"The true philosopher," he answered, "appears to me to despise them."

"Does not then," he continued, "the whole employment of such a man appear to you to be, not about the body, but to separate himself from it as much as possible, and be occupied about his soul?"

"It does."

"First of all then, in such matters, does not the
65 philosopher, above all other men, evidently free his soul as much as he can from communion with the body?"

"It appears so."

"And it appears, Simmias, to the generality of men, that he who takes no pleasure in such things, and who does not use them, does not deserve to live; but that he nearly approaches to death who cares nothing for the pleasures that subsist through the body."

"You speak very truly."

"But what with respect to the acquisition of wisdom, is the body an impediment or not, if any one takes it with him as a partner in the search? What I mean is this: Do sight and hearing convey any truth to men, or are they such as the poets constantly sing, who say that we neither hear nor see any thing with accuracy? If, however, these bodily senses are neither accurate nor clear, much less can the others be so: for they are all far inferior to these. Do they not seem so to you?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"When then," said he, "does the soul light on the truth? for, when it attempts to consider any thing in conjunction with the body, it is plain that it is then led astray by it."

"You say truly."

"Must it not then be by reasoning, if at all, that any of the things that really are become known to it?".

"Yes."

"And surely the soul then reasons best when none of these things disturb it, neither hearing, nor sight, nor pain, nor pleasure of any kind, but it retires as much as possible within itself, taking leave of the body, and, as far as it can, not communicating or being in contact with it, it aims at the discovery of that which is."

"Such is the case."

"Does not then the soul of the philosopher, in these cases, despise the body, and flee from it, and seek to retire within itself?"

"It appears so."

"But what as to such things as these, Simmias? Do we say that justice itself is something or nothing?"

"We say it is something, by Jupiter."

"And that beauty and goodness are something?"

"How not?"

"Now then: have you ever seen any thing of this kind with your eyes?"

"By no means," he replied.

"Did you ever lay hold of them by any other bodily sense? but I speak generally, as of magnitude, health, strength, and, in a word, of the essence of every thing, that is to say, what each is. Is then the exact truth of these perceived by means of the body, or is it thus, whoever amongst us habituates himself to reflect most deeply and accurately on each several thing about which he is considering, he will make the nearest approach to the knowledge of it?"

"Certainly."

"Would not he, then, do this with the utmost purity, who should in the highest degree approach each subject by means of the mere mental faculties, neither employing the sight in conjunction with the reflective faculty,
66 nor introducing any other sense together with reasoning; but who, using pure reflection by itself, should attempt to search out each essence purely by itself, freed as much as possible from the eyes and ears, and, in a word, from the whole body, as disturbing the soul, and not suffering it to acquire truth and wisdom, when it is in communion with it. Is not he the person, Simmias, if any one can, who will arrive at the knowledge of that which is?"

"You speak with wonderful truth, Socrates," replied Simmias.

"Wherefore," he said, "it necessarily follows from all this, that some such opinion as this should be entertained by genuine philosophers, so that they should speak among themselves as follows: 'A by-path, as it were, seems to lead us on in our researches undertaken by reason,' because as long as we are encumbered with the body, and our soul is contaminated with such an evil, we can never fully attain to what we desire; and this, we say, is truth. For the body subjects us to innumerable hindrances on account of its necessary support, and moreover if any diseases befal us, they impede us in our search after that which is; and it fills us with longings, desires, fears, all kinds of fancies, and

a multitude of absurdities, so that, as it is said in real truth, by reason of the body it is never possible for us to make any advances in wisdom. For nothing else but the body and its desires occasion wars, seditions, and contests; for all wars amongst us arise on account of our desire to acquire wealth; and we are compelled to acquire wealth on account of the body, being enslaved to its service; and consequently on all these accounts we are hindered in the pursuit of philosophy. But the worst of all is, that if it leaves us any leisure, and we apply ourselves to the consideration of any subject, it constantly obtrudes itself in the midst of our researches, and occasions trouble and disturbance, and confounds us so that we are not able by reason of it to discern the truth. It has then in reality been demonstrated to us, that if we are ever to know any thing purely, we must be separated from the body, and contemplate the things themselves by the mere soul. And then, as it seems, we shall obtain that which we desire, and which we profess ourselves to be lovers of, wisdom, when we are dead, as reason shows, but not while we are alive. For if it is not possible to know any thing purely in conjunction with the body, one of these two things must follow, either that we can never acquire knowledge, or only after we are dead; for then the soul will subsist 67
apart by itself, separate from the body, but not before. And while we live, we shall thus, as it seems, approach nearest to knowledge, if we hold no intercourse or communion at all with the body, except what absolute necessity requires, nor suffer ourselves to be polluted by its nature, but purify ourselves from it, until God himself shall release us. And thus being pure, and freed from the folly of body, we shall in all likelihood be with others like ourselves, and shall of ourselves know the whole real essence, and that probably is truth; for it is not allowable for the impure to attain to the pure. Such things, I think, Simmias, all true lovers of wisdom must both think and say to one another. Does it not seem so to you?"

"Most assuredly, Socrates."

"If this then," said Socrates, "is true, my friend,

there is great hope for one who arrives where I am going, there, if any where, to acquire that in perfection for the sake of which we have taken so much pains during our past life; so that the journey now appointed me is set out upon with good hope, and will be so by any other man who thinks that his mind has been as it were purified."

"Certainly," said Simmias.

"But does not purification consist in this, as was said in a former part of our discourse, in separating as much as possible the soul from the body, and in accustoming it to gather and collect itself by itself on all sides apart from the body, and to dwell, as far as it can, both now and hereafter, alone by itself, delivered as it were from the shackles of the body?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"Is this then called death, this deliverance and separation of the soul from the body?"

"Assuredly," he answered.

"But, as we affirmed, those who pursue philosophy rightly, are especially and alone desirous to deliver it, and this is the very study of philosophers, the deliverance and separation of the soul from the body, is it not?"

"It appears so."

"Then, as I said at first, would it not be ridiculous for a man who has endeavoured throughout his life to live as near as possible to death, then, when death arrives, to grieve? would not this be ridiculous?"

"How should it not?"

"In reality then, Simmias," he continued, "those who pursue philosophy rightly study to die; and to them of all men death is least formidable. Judge from this. Since they altogether hate the body and desire to keep the soul by itself, would it not be irrational if, when this comes to pass, they should be afraid and grieve,
68 and not be glad to go to that place, where on their arrival they may hope to obtain that which they longed for throughout life; but they longed for wisdom; and to be freed from association with that which they hated? Have many of their own accord wished to descend into

Hades, on account of human objects of affection, their wives and sons, induced by this very hope of there seeing and being with those whom they have loved; and shall one who really loves wisdom, and firmly cherishes this very hope, that he shall no where else attain it in a manner worthy of the name, except in Hades, be grieved at dying, and not gladly go there? We must think that he would gladly go, my friend, if he be in truth a philosopher; for he will be firmly persuaded of this, that he will no where else but there attain wisdom in its purity; and if this be so, would it not be very irrational, as I just now said, if such a man were to be afraid of death?"

"Very much so, by Jupiter," he replied.

"Would not this then," he resumed, "be a sufficient proof to you, with respect to a man whom you should see grieved when about to die, that he was not a lover of wisdom but a lover of his body? and this same person is probably a lover of riches and a lover of honour, one or both of these."

"It certainly is as you say," he replied.

"Does not then," he said, "that which is called fortitude, Simmias, eminently belong to philosophers?"

"By all means," he answered.

"And temperance also, which even the multitude call temperance, and which consists in not being carried away by the passions, but in holding them in contempt, and keeping them in subjection, does not this belong to those only who most despise the body, and live in the study of philosophy?"

"Necessarily so," he replied.

"For," he continued, "if you will consider the fortitude and temperance of others, they will appear to you to be absurd."

"How so, Socrates?"

"Do you know," he said, "that all others consider death among the great evils?"

"They do indeed," he answered.

"Then do the brave amongst them endure death, when they do endure it, through dread of greater evils?"

"It is so."

"All men, therefore, except philosophers, are brave through being afraid and through fear; though it is absurd that any one should be brave through fear and cowardice."

"Certainly."

"But what? are not these amongst them who keep their passions in subjection, affected in the same way? and are they not temperate through a kind of intemperance? and although we may say, perhaps, that this is impossible, nevertheless the manner in which they are affected with respect to this silly temperance resembles this; for, fearing to be deprived of other pleasures, and desiring them, they abstain from some, being mastered
69 by others. And though they call intemperance the being governed by pleasures, yet it happens to them that, by being mastered by some pleasures, they master others; and this is similar to what was just now said, that in a certain manner they become temperate through intemperance."

"So it seems."

"My dear Simmias, consider that this is not a right exchange for virtue, to barter pleasures for pleasures, pains for pains, fear for fear, and the greater for the lesser, like pieces of money; but that that alone is the right coin, for which we ought to barter all these things, wisdom; and for this, and with this every thing is in reality bought and sold, fortitude, temperance, and justice, and, in a word, true virtue subsists with wisdom, whether pleasures and fears, and every thing else of the kind, are present or absent; but when separated from wisdom, and changed one for another, consider whether such virtue is not a mere outline, and in reality servile, possessing neither soundness nor truth; but the really true virtue is a purification from all such things, and temperance, justice, fortitude, and wisdom itself, are a kind of initiatory purification. And those who instituted the mysteries for us appear to have been by no means contemptible, but in reality to have intimated long since that whoever shall arrive in Hades unexpiated and uninitiated shall lie in mud, but he that

arrives there purified and initiated, shall dwell with the gods. 'For there are,' say those who preside at the mysteries, 'many wand-bearers, but few inspired.' These last, in my opinion, are no other than those who have pursued philosophy rightly: that I might be of their number, I have, to the utmost of my ability, left no means untried, but have endeavoured to the utmost of my power. But whether I have endeavoured rightly and have in any respect succeeded, on arriving there I shall know clearly, if it please God, very shortly, as it appears to me.

"Such then, Simmias and Cebes," he added, "is the defence I make, for that I, on good grounds, do not repine or grieve at leaving you and my masters here, being persuaded that there, no less than here, I shall meet with good masters and friends. But to the multitude this is incredible. If, however, I have succeeded better with you in my defence than I did with the Athenian judges, it is well."

When Socrates had thus spoken, Cebes, taking up the discussion, said, "Socrates, all the rest appears to me to be said rightly, but what you have said respecting the soul will occasion much incredulity in many from the apprehension that, when it is separated from the body, it no longer exists any where, but is destroyed and perishes on the very day in which a man dies, and that immediately it is separated and goes out from the body, it is dispersed and vanishes like breath or smoke, and is no longer any where; since, if it remained any where united in itself, and freed from those evils which you have just now enumerated, there would be an abundant and good hope, Socrates, that what you say is true. But this probably needs no little persuasion and proof, that the soul of a man who dies, exists, and possesses activity and intelligence." 70

"You say truly, Cebes," said Socrates, "but what shall we do? Are you willing that we should converse on these points, whether such is probably the case or not?"

"Indeed," replied Cebes, "I should gladly hear your opinion on these matters."

"I do not think," said Socrates, "that any one who should now hear us, even though he were a comic poet, would say that I am talking idly, or discoursing on subjects that do not concern me. If you please, then, we will examine into it. Let us consider it in this point of view, whether the souls of men who are dead exist in Hades, or not. This is an ancient saying, which we now call to mind, that souls departing hence exist there, and return hither again, and are produced from the dead. And if this is so, that the living are produced again from the dead, can there be any other consequence than that our souls are there? for surely they could not be produced again if they did not exist; and this would be a sufficient proof that these things are so, if it should in reality be evident that the living are produced from no other source than the dead. But, if this is not the case, there will be need of other arguments."

"Certainly," said Cebes.

"You must not, then," he continued, "consider this only with respect to men, if you wish to ascertain it with greater certainty, but also with respect to all animals and plants, and, in a word, with respect to every thing that is subject to generation, let us see whether they are not all so produced, no otherwise than contraries from contraries, wherever they have any such quality, as for instance the honourable is contrary to the base, and the just to the unjust, and so with ten thousand other things. Let us consider this, then, whether it is necessary that all things which have a contrary should be produced from nothing else than their contrary. As, for instance, when any thing becomes greater, is it not necessary that, from being previously smaller, it afterwards became greater?"

"Yes."

71 "And if it becomes smaller, will it not, from being previously greater, afterwards become smaller?"

"It is so," he replied.

"And from stronger, weaker? and from slower, swifter?"

"Certainly."

"What then? if any thing becomes worse, must it not become so from better? and if more just, from more unjust?"

"How should it not?"

"We have then," he said, "sufficiently determined this, that all things are thus produced, contraries from contraries?"

"Certainly."

"What next? is there also something of this kind in them, for instance, between all two contraries a mutual twofold production, from one to the other, and from that other back again? for between a greater thing and a smaller there is increase and decrease, and do we not accordingly call the one to increase, the other to decrease?"

"Yes," he replied.

"And must not to be separated and commingled, to grow cold and to grow warm, and every thing in the same manner, even though sometimes we have not names to designate them, yet in fact be every where thus circumstanced of necessity, as to be produced from each other, and be subject to a reciprocal generation?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"What then?" said Socrates, "has life any contrary, as waking has its contrary, sleeping?"

"Certainly," he answered.

"What?"

"Death," he replied.

"Are not these, then, produced from each other, since they are contraries, and are not the modes by which they are produced twofold, intervening between these two?"

"How should it be otherwise?"

"I then," continued Socrates, "will describe to you one pair of the contraries which I have just now mentioned, both what it is and its mode of production; and do you describe to me the other. I say that one is to sleep, the other to awake; and from sleeping awaking is produced, and from awaking sleeping, and that the modes of their production are the one to fall asleep, the other to be roused. Have I sufficiently explained this to you or not?"

"Certainly."

"Do you then," he said, "describe to me, in the same manner, with respect to life and death? Do you not say that life is contrary to death?"

"I do."

"And that they are produced from each other?"

"Yes."

"What, then, is produced from life?"

"Death," he replied.

"What, then," said he, "is produced from death?"

"I must needs confess," he replied, "that life is."

"From the dead, then, O Cebes, living things and living men are produced."

"It appears so," he said.

"Our souls, therefore," said Socrates, "exist in Hades."

"So it seems."

"With respect, then, to their mode of production, is not one of them very clear? for to die surely is clear, is it not?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"What, then, shall we do?" he continued; "shall we not find a corresponding contrary mode of production, or will nature be defective in this? Or must we discover a contrary mode of production to dying?"

"By all means," he said.

"What is this?"

"To revive."

"Therefore," he proceeded, "if there is such a thing
72 as to revive, will not this reviving be a mode of production from the dead to the living?"

"Certainly."

"Thus, then, we have agreed, that the living are produced from the dead, no less than the dead from the living: but, this being the case, there appears to me sufficient proof that the souls of the dead must necessarily exist somewhere, from whence they are again produced."

"It appears to me, Socrates," he said, "that this must necessarily follow from what has been admitted."

"See now, O Cebes," he said, "that we have not

agreed on these things improperly, as it appears to me: for if one class of things were not constantly given back in the place of another, revolving as it were in a circle, but generation were direct from one thing alone into its opposite, and did not turn round again to the other, or retrace its course, do you know that all things would at length have the same form, be in the same state, and cease to be produced?"

"How say you?" he asked.

"It is by no means difficult," he replied, "to understand what I mean; if, for instance, there should be such a thing as falling asleep, but no reciprocal waking again produced from a state of sleep, you know that at length all things would show the fable of Endymion to be a jest, and it would be thought nothing at all of, because every thing else would be in the same state as him, namely, asleep. And if all things were mingled together, but never separated, that doctrine of Anaxagoras would soon be verified, 'all things would be together.' Likewise, my dear Cebes, if all things that partake of life should die, and after they are dead should remain in this state of death, and not revive again, would it not necessarily follow that at length all things should be dead, and nothing alive? for if living beings are produced from other things, and living beings die, what could prevent their being all absorbed in death?"

"Nothing whatever, I think, Socrates," replied Cebes, "but you appear to me to speak the exact truth."

"For, Cebes," he continued, "as it seems to me, such undoubtedly is the case, and we have not admitted these things under a delusion, but it is in reality true that there is a reviving again, that the living are produced from the dead, that the souls of the dead exist, and that the condition of the good is better, and of the evil, worse."

"And indeed," said Cebes, interrupting him, "according to that doctrine, Socrates, which you are frequently in the habit of advancing, if it is true, that our learning is nothing else than reminiscence, according to this it is surely necessary that we must at some former time have learned what we now remember.

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But this is impossible, unless our soul existed some-
73 where before it came into this human form; so that from hence also the soul appears to be something immortal."

"But, Cebes," said Simmias, interrupting him, "what proofs are there of these things? remind me of them, for I do not very well remember them at present."

"It is proved," said Cebes, "by one argument, and that a most beautiful one, that men, when questioned, if one questions them properly, of themselves describe all things as they are: however, if they had not innate knowledge and right reason, they would never be able to do this. Moreover, if one leads them to diagrams, or any thing else of the kind, it is then most clearly apparent that this is the case."

"But if you are not persuaded in this way, Simmias," said Socrates, "see if you will agree with us on considering the matter thus. For do you doubt how that which is called learning is reminiscence?"

"I do not doubt," said Simmias, "but I require this very thing of which we are speaking, to be reminded; and indeed, from what Cebes has begun to say, I almost now remember, and am persuaded; nevertheless, however, I should like to hear now how you would attempt to prove it."

"I do it thus," he replied: "we admit surely that if any one be reminded of any thing, he must needs have known that thing at some time or other before."

"Certainly," he said.

"Do we then admit this also, that when knowledge comes in a certain manner it is reminiscence? But the manner I mean is this; if any one, upon seeing or hearing, or perceiving through the medium of any other sense, some particular thing, should not only know that, but also form an idea of something else, of which the knowledge is not the same, but different, should we not justly say, that he remembered that of which he received the idea?"

"How mean you?"

"For instance; the knowledge of a man is different from that of a lyre."

"How not?"

"Do you not know, then, that lovers when they see a lyre, or a garment, or any thing else which their favourite is accustomed to use, are thus affected; they both recognise the lyre, and receive in their minds the form of the person to whom the lyre belonged? This is reminiscence: just as any one, seeing Simmias, is often reminded of Cebes, and so in an infinite number of similar instances."

"An infinite number indeed, by Jupiter," said Simmias.

"Is not then," he said, "something of this sort a kind of reminiscence? especially when one is thus affected with respect to things which, from lapse of time, and not thinking of them, one has now forgotten?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"But what?" he continued, "does it happen, that when one sees a painted horse or a painted lyre, one is reminded of a man, and that when one sees a picture of Simmias one is reminded of Cebes?"

"Certainly."

"And does it not also happen, that on seeing a picture of Simmias one is reminded of Simmias himself?"

"It does indeed," he replied. 74

"Does it not happen, then, according to all this, that reminiscence arises partly from things like, and partly from things unlike?"

"It does."

"But when one is reminded by things like, is it not necessary that one should be thus further affected, so as to perceive whether, as regards likeness, this falls short or not of the thing of which one has been reminded?"

"It is necessary," he replied.

"Consider, then," said Socrates, "if the case is thus. Do we allow that there is such a thing as equality? I do not mean of one log with another, nor one stone with another, nor any thing else of this kind, but something altogether different from all these,—abstract equality; do we allow that there is any such thing or not?"

"By Jupiter, we most assuredly do allow it," replied Simmias.

"And do we know what it is itself?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"Whence have we derived the knowledge of it? Is it not from the things we have just now mentioned, and that from seeing logs, or stones, or other things of the kind, equal, we have from these formed an idea of that which is different from these? for does it not appear to you to be different? Consider the matter thus. Do not stones that are equal, and logs sometimes that are the same, appear at one time equal, and at another not?"

"Certainly."

"But what? does abstract equality ever appear to you unequal? or equality inequality?"

"Never, Socrates, at any time."

"These equal things, then," he said, "and abstract equality, are not the same?"

"By no means, Socrates, as it appears."

"However, from these equal things," he said, "which are different from that abstract equality, have you not formed your idea and derived your knowledge of it?"

"You speak most truly," he replied.

"Is it not, therefore, from its being like or unlike them?"

"Certainly."

"But it makes no difference," he said. "When, therefore, on seeing one thing, you form, from the sight of it, the notion of another, whether like or unlike, this," he said, "must necessarily be reminiscence."

"Certainly."

"What, then, as to this?" he continued; "are we affected in any such way with regard to logs and the equal things we have just now spoken of? and do they appear to us to be equal in the same manner as abstract equality itself is, or do they fall short in some degree, or not at all, of being such as equality itself is?"

"They fall far short," he replied.

"Do we admit, then, that when one, on beholding some particular thing, perceives that it aims, as that

which I now see, at being like something else that exists, but falls short of it, and cannot become such as that is, but is inferior to it, do we admit that he who perceives this must necessarily have had a previous knowledge of that which he says it resembles, though imperfectly?"

"It is necessary."

"What then? are we affected in some such way, or not, with respect to things equal and abstract equality itself?"

"Assuredly."

"It is necessary, therefore, that we must have known abstract equality before the time when on first seeing 75
equal things, we perceived that they all aimed at resembling equality, but failed in doing so."

"Such is the case."

"Moreover, we admit this too, that we perceived this, and could not possibly perceive it by any other means than the sight, or touch, or some other of the senses: for I say the same of them all."

"For they are the same, Socrates, so far as our argument is concerned."

"However, we must perceive by means of the senses, that all things which come under the senses aim at that abstract equality, and yet fall short of it: or how shall we say it is?"

"Even so."

"Before, then, we began to see, and hear, and use our other senses, we must have had a knowledge of equality itself, what it is, if we were to refer to it those equal things that come under the senses, and observe that all such things aim at resembling that, but fall far short of it."

"This necessarily follows, Socrates, from what has been already said."

"But did we not, as soon as we were born, see and hear, and possess our other senses?"

"Certainly."

"But, we have said, before we possessed these, we must have had a knowledge of abstract equality?"

"Yes."

"We must have had it, then, as it seems, before we were born."

"It seems so."

"If, therefore, having this before we were born, we were born possessing it, we knew both before we were born, and as soon as we were born, not only the equal and the greater and smaller, but all things of the kind; for our present discussion is not more respecting equality than the beautiful itself, the good, the just, and the holy, and in one word, respecting every thing which we mark with the seal of existence, both in the questions we ask, and the answers we give. So that we must necessarily have had a knowledge of all these before we were born."

"Such is the case."

"And if, having once had it, we did not constantly forget it, we should always be born with this knowledge, and should always retain it through life: for to know is this, when one has got a knowledge of any thing, to retain and not lose it; for do we not call this oblivion, Simmias, the loss of knowledge?"

"Assuredly, Socrates," he replied.

"But if, having had it before we were born, we lose it at our birth, and afterwards, through exercising the senses about these things, we recover the knowledge which we once before possessed, would not that which we call learning be a recovery of our own knowledge? and in saying that this is to remember should we not say rightly?"

"Certainly."

76 "For this appeared to be possible, for one having perceived any thing, either by seeing or hearing, or employing any other sense, to form an idea of something different from this, which he had forgotten, and with which this was connected by being unlike or like. So that, as I said, one of these two things must follow, either we are all born with this knowledge, and we retain it through life, or those whom we say learn afterwards do nothing else but remember, and this learning will be reminiscence."

"Such certainly is the case, Socrates."

"Which, then, do you choose, Simmias: that we are born with knowledge, or that we afterwards remember what we had formerly known?"

"At present, Socrates, I am unable to choose?"

"But what? are you able to choose in this case, and what do you think about it? Can a man, who possesses knowledge, give a reason for the things that he knows, or not?"

"He needs must be able to do so, Socrates," he replied.

"And do all men appear to you, to be able to give a reason for the things of which we have just now been speaking?"

"I wish they could," said Simmias; "but I am much more afraid, that at this time to-morrow, there will no longer be any one able to do this properly."

"Do not all men then, Simmias," he said, "seem to you to know these things?"

"By no means."

"Do they remember, then, what they once learned?"

"Necessarily so."

"When did our souls receive this knowledge? not surely, since we were born into the world."

"Assuredly not."

"Before, then?"

"Yes."

"Our souls therefore, Simmias, existed before they were in a human form, separate from bodies, and possessed intelligence."

"Unless, Socrates, we receive this knowledge at our birth, for this period yet remains."

"Be it so, my friend. But at what other time do we lose it? for we are not born with it, as we have just now admitted. Do we lose it then at the very time in which we receive it? Or can you mention any other time?"

"By no means, Socrates: I was not aware that I was saying nothing to the purpose."

"Does the case then stand thus with us, Simmias," he proceeded. "If those things which we are continually talking about really exist, the beautiful, the

good, and every such essence, and to this we refer all things that come under the senses, as finding it to have a prior existence, and to be our own, and if we compare these things to it, it necessarily follows, that as these exist, so likewise our soul exists even before we are born; but if these do not exist this discussion will have been undertaken in vain. Is it not so? and is there not an equal necessity, both that these things should exist, and our souls also before we are born, and if not the former neither the latter?"

"Most assuredly, Socrates," said Simmias, "there appears to me to be the same necessity, and the argu-
77 ment admirably tends to prove that our souls exist before we are born, just as that essence does which you have now mentioned. For I hold nothing so clear to me as this, that all such things most certainly exist, as the beautiful, the good, and all the rest that you just now spoke of; and as far as I am concerned the case is sufficiently demonstrated."

"But how does it appear to Cebes?" said Socrates; "for it is necessary to persuade Cebes too."

"He is sufficiently persuaded, I think," said Simmias, "although he is the most pertinacious of men in distrusting arguments. Yet I think he is sufficiently persuaded of this, that our soul existed before we were born. But whether when we are dead, it will still exist, does not appear to me to have been demonstrated, Socrates," he continued, "but that popular doubt, which Cebes just now mentioned, still stands in our way, whether, when a man dies, the soul is not dispersed, and this is the end of its existence. For what hinders its being born, and formed from some other source, and existing before it came into a human body, and yet when it has come, and is separated from this body, its then also dying itself, and being destroyed?"

"You say well, Simmias," said Cebes; "for it appears that only one half of what is necessary has been demonstrated, namely, that our soul existed before we were born: but it is necessary to demonstrate further, that when we are dead, it will exist no less than before we were born, if the demonstration is to be made complete."

"This has been even now demonstrated, Simmias and Cebes," said Socrates, "if you will only connect this last argument with that which we before assented to, that every thing living is produced from that which is dead. For if the soul exists before, and it is necessary for it when it enters into life, and is born, to be produced from nothing else than death, and from being dead, how is it not necessary for it also to exist after death, since it must needs be produced again? What you require, then, has been already demonstrated. However, both you and Simmias appear to me as if you wished to sift this argument more thoroughly, and to be afraid like children, lest on the soul's departure from the body the winds should blow it away and disperse it, especially if one should happen to die not in a calm, but in a violent storm."

Upon this Cebes, smiling, said, "Endeavour to teach us better, Socrates, as if we were afraid, or rather not as if we were afraid, though perhaps there is some boy within us who has such a dread. Let us, then, endeavour to persuade him not to be afraid of death, as of hobgoblins."

"But you must charm him every day," said Socrates, "until you have quieted his fears."

"But whence, Socrates," he said, "can we procure a 78
skilful charmer for such a case, now that you are about to leave us?"

"Greece is wide, Cebes," he replied, "and in it surely there are skilful men, there are also many barbarous nations, all of which you should search through, seeking such a charmer, sparing neither money nor toil, as there is nothing on which you can more seasonably spend your money. You should also seek for him among yourselves; for perhaps you could not easily find any more competent than yourselves to do this."

"This shall be done," said Cebes, "but, if it is agreeable to you, let us return to the point from whence we digressed."

"It will be agreeable to me, for how should it not?"

"You say well," rejoined Cebes.

"We ought then," said Socrates, "to ask ourselves

some such question as this, to what kind of thing it appertains to be thus affected, namely to be dispersed, and for what we ought to fear, lest it should be so affected, and for what not. And after this, we should consider which of the two the soul is; and in the result should either be confident or fearful for our soul."

"You speak truly," said he.

"Does it not, then, appertain to that which is formed by composition, and is naturally compounded, to be thus affected, to be dissolved in the same manner as that in which it was compounded; and if there is any thing not compounded, does it not appertain to this alone, if to any thing, not to be thus affected?"

"It appears to me to be so," said Cebes.

"Is it not most probable then that things which are always the same, and in the same state, are uncompounded, but that things which are constantly changing, and are never in the same state, are compounded?"

"To me it appears so."

"Let us return then," he said, "to the subjects on which we before discoursed. Whether is essence itself, of which we gave this account that it exists, both in our questions and answers, always the same, or does it sometimes change? Does equality itself, the beautiful itself, and each several thing which is, ever undergo any change, however small? Or does each of them which exists, being an unmixed essence by itself, continue always the same, and in the same state, and never undergo any variation at all under any circumstances?"

"They must of necessity continue the same and in the same state, Socrates," said Cebes.

"But what shall we say of the many beautiful things, such as men, horses, garments, or other things of the kind, whether equal, or beautiful, or of all things synonymous with them? Do they continue the same, or, quite contrary to the former, are they never at any time, so to say, the same, either with respect to themselves or one another?"

"These, on the other hand," replied Cebes, "never continue the same."

79 "These then you can touch, or see, or perceive by

the other senses; but those that continue the same, you cannot apprehend in any other way than by the exercise of thought; for such things are invisible, and are not seen?"

"You say what is strictly true," replied Cebes.

"We may assume then, if you please," he continued, "that there are two species of things, the one visible, the other invisible?"

"We may," he said.

"And the invisible always continuing the same, but the visible never the same?"

"This too," he said, "we may assume."

"Come then," he asked, "is there any thing else belonging to us, than on the one hand body, and on the other soul?"

"Nothing else," he replied.

"To which species, then, shall we say the body is more like, and more nearly allied?"

"It is clear to every one," he said, "that it is to the visible."

"But what of the soul? Is it visible or invisible?"

"It is not visible to men, Socrates," he replied.

"But we speak of things which are visible or not so to the nature of men: or to some other nature, think you?"

"To that of men."

"What then shall we say of the soul, that it is visible, or not visible?"

"Not visible."

"Is it then invisible?"

"Yes."

"The soul then is more like the invisible than the body, and the body, the visible?"

"It must needs be so, Socrates."

"And did we not some time since say this too, that the soul, when it employs the body to examine any thing, either by means of the sight or hearing, or any other sense, (for to examine any thing by means of the body is to do so by the senses,) is then drawn by the body to things that never continue the same, and wanders and is confused, and reels as if intoxicated

through coming into contact with things of this kind?"

"Certainly."

"But when it examines any thing by itself, does it approach that which is pure, eternal, immortal, and unchangeable, and, as being allied to it, continue constantly with it, so long as it subsists by itself, and has the power, and does it cease from its wandering, and constantly continue the same with respect to those things, through coming into contact with things of this kind? and is this affection of the soul called wisdom?"

"You speak," he said, "in every respect, well and truly, Socrates."

"To which species of the two, then, both from what was before, and now said, does the soul appear to you to be more like and more nearly allied?"

"Every one, I think, would allow, Socrates," he replied, "even the dullest person, from this method of reasoning that the soul is in every respect more like that which continues constantly the same, than that which does not so."

"But what as to the body?"

"It is more like the other."

"Consider it also thus, that, when soul and body are
80 together, nature enjoins the latter to be subservient and obey, the former to rule and exercise dominion. And in this way, which of the two appears to you to be like the divine, and which the mortal? Does it not appear to you to be natural that the divine should rule and command, but the mortal obey and be subservient?"

"To me it does so."

"Which, then, does the soul resemble?"

"It is clear, Socrates, that the soul resembles the divine, but the body, the mortal."

"Consider then, Cebes," said he, "whether, from all that has been said, these conclusions follow, that the soul is most like that which is divine, immortal, intelligent, uniform, indissoluble, and which always continues in the same state, but that the body on the other hand is most like that which is human, mortal, unintelligent, multiform, dissoluble, and which never continues in the

same state. Can we say any thing against this, my dear Cebes, to show that it is not so?"

"We cannot."

"What then? Since these things are so, does it not appertain to the body to be quickly dissolved, but to the soul, on the contrary, to be altogether indissoluble, or nearly so?"

"How not?"

"You perceive, however," he said, "that when a man dies, the visible part of him, the body, which is exposed to sight, and which we call a corpse, to which it appertains to be dissolved, to fall asunder and be dispersed, does not immediately undergo any of these affections, but remains for a considerable time, and especially so if any one should die with his body in full vigour, and at a corresponding age; for when the body has collapsed and been embalmed, as those that are embalmed in Egypt, it remains almost entire for an incredible length of time; and some parts of the body, even though it does decay, such as the bones and nerves, and every thing of that kind, are nevertheless, as one may say, immortal. Is it not so?"

"Yes."

"Can the soul, then, which is invisible, and which goes to another place like itself, excellent, pure, and invisible, and therefore truly called the invisible world, to the presence of a good and wise God, (whither if God will, my soul also must shortly go,) can this soul of ours, I ask, being such and of such a nature, when separated from the body be immediately dispersed and destroyed, as most men assert? Far from it, my dear Cebes and Simmias. But the case is much rather thus; if it is separated in a pure state, taking nothing of the body with it, as not having willingly communicated with it in the present life, but having shunned it and gathered itself within itself, as constantly studying this; but this is nothing else than to pursue philosophy aright, and in reality to study how to die easily; would not this be to 81
study how to die?"

"Most assuredly."

"Does not the soul, then, when in this state, depart

to that which resembles itself, the invisible, the divine, immortal, and wise? and on its arrival there, is it not its lot to be happy, free from error, ignorance, fears, wild passions, and all the other evils to which human nature is subject, and, as is said of the initiated, does it not in truth pass the rest of its time with the gods? Must we affirm that it is so, Cebes, or otherwise?"

"So, by Jupiter," said Cebes.

"But, I think, if it departs from the body polluted and impure, as having constantly held communion with the body, and having served and loved it, and been bewitched by it, through desires and pleasures, so as to think that there is nothing real except what is corporeal, which one can touch and see, and drink and eat, and employ for sensual purposes; but what is dark and invisible to the eyes, which is intellectual and apprehended by philosophy, having been accustomed to hate, fear, and shun this, do you think that a soul thus affected can depart from the body by itself, and uncontaminated?"

"By no means whatever," he replied.

"But I think it will be impressed with that which is corporeal, which the intercourse and communion of the body, through constant association and great attention, have made natural to it."

"Certainly."

"We must think, my dear Cebes, that this is ponderous and heavy, earthly and visible, by possessing which such a soul is weighed down, and drawn again into the visible world through dread of the invisible and of Hades, wandering, as it is said, amongst monuments and tombs, about which, indeed, certain shadowy phantoms of souls have been seen, being such images as those souls produced which have not departed pure from the body, but which partake of the visible, on which account also they are visible."

"That is probable, Socrates."

"Probable indeed, Cebes; and not that these are the souls of the good, but of the wicked, which are compelled to wander about such places, paying the penalty of their former conduct, which was evil; and they

wander about so long, until, through the desire of the corporeal nature that accompanies them, they are again united to a body; and they are united, as is probable, to animals having the same habits as those they have given themselves up to during life."

"But what do you say these are, Socrates?"

"For instance, those who have given themselves up to gluttony, wantonness, and drinking, and having put no restraint on themselves, will probably be clothed in the form of asses and brutes of that kind. Do you not 82
think so?"

"You say what is very probable."

"And that such as have set great value on injustice, tyranny, and rapine, will be clothed in the species of wolves, hawks, and kites? Where else can we say such souls go?"

"Without doubt," said Cebes, "into such as these."

"Is it not then evident," he continued, "as to the rest, whither each will go, according to the resemblances of their several pursuits?"

"It is evident," he replied, "how not?"

"Of these, then," he said, "are not they the most happy, and do they not go to the best place, who have practised that social and civilized virtue, which they call temperance and justice, and which is produced from habit and exercise, without philosophy and reflection?"

"In what respect are these the most happy?"

"Because it is probable that these should again migrate into a corresponding civilized and peaceable kind of animals, such as bees perhaps, or wasps, or ants, or even into the same human species again, and from these become moderate men."

"It is probable."

"But it is not lawful for any one, who has not studied philosophy and departed this life perfectly pure, to pass into the rank of gods, but only for the true lover of wisdom. And on this account, my friends Simmias and Cebes, those who philosophize rightly abstain from all bodily desires, and persevere in doing so, and do not give themselves up to them, not fearing the loss of property and poverty, as the generality of men and the

lovers of wealth; nor again dreading disgrace and ignominy like those who are lovers of power and honour, do they then abstain from them."

"For it would not become them to do so, Socrates," says Cebes.

"It would not, by Jupiter," he rejoined. "Wherefore, Cebes, they who care at all for their soul, and do not spend their lives in the culture of their bodies, despising all these, proceed not in the same way with them, as being ignorant whither they are going, but being convinced that they ought not to act contrary to philosophy, but in accordance with the freedom and purification she affords, they give themselves up to her direction, following her wherever she leads."

"How, Socrates?"

"I will tell you," he replied. "The lovers of wisdom know, that philosophy receiving their soul plainly bound and glued to the body, and compelled to view things through this, as through a prison, and not directly by herself, and sunk in utter ignorance, and perceiving too the strength of the prison, that it arises from desire, so that he that is bound as much as possible assists in
83 binding himself. I say, then, the lovers of wisdom know that philosophy, receiving their soul in this state, gently exhorts it, and endeavours to free it, by showing that the view of things by means of the eyes is full of deception, as also is that through the ears and the other senses, persuading an abandonment of these so far as it is not absolutely necessary to use them, and advising the soul to be collected and concentrated within itself, and to believe nothing else but herself, with respect to what she herself understands of things that have a real subsistence, and to consider nothing true which she views through the medium of others, and which differ under different aspects; for that a thing of this kind is sensible and visible, but that what she herself perceives is intelligible and invisible. The soul of the true philosopher, therefore, thinking that she ought not to oppose this deliverance, accordingly abstains as much as possible from pleasures and desires, griefs and fears, considering that when any one

is exceedingly delighted or alarmed, grieved or influenced by desire, he does not merely suffer such evil from these things as one might suppose, such as either being sick or wasting his property, through indulging his desires; but that which is the greatest evil, and the worst of all, this he suffers and is not conscious of it."

"But what is this evil, Socrates?" said Cebes.

"That the soul of every man is compelled to be either vehemently delighted or grieved about some particular thing, and at the same time to consider that the thing about which it is thus strongly affected is most real and most true, though it is not so. But these are chiefly visible objects; are they not?"

"Certainly."

"In this state of affection, then, is not the soul especially shackled by the body?"

"How so?"

"Because each pleasure and pain, having a nail as it were, nails the soul to the body, and fastens it to it, and causes it to become corporeal, deeming those things to be true whatever the body asserts to be so. For, in consequence of its forming the same opinions with the body, and delighting in the same things, it is compelled, I think, to possess similar manners, and to be similarly nourished, so that it can never pass into Hades in a pure state, but must ever depart polluted by the body, and so quickly falls again into another body, and grows up as if it were sown, and consequently is deprived of all association with that which is divine, and pure, and uniform."

"You speak most truly, Socrates," said Cebes.

"For these reasons, therefore, Cebes, those who are truly lovers of wisdom are moderate and resolute, and not for the reasons that most people say. Do you think as they do?"

"Assuredly not." 84

"No, truly. But the soul of a philosopher would reason thus, and would not think that philosophy ought to set it free, and that when it is freed it should give itself up again to pleasures and pains, to bind it down again, and make her work void, weaving a kind of

Penelope's web the reverse way. On the contrary, effecting a calm of the passions, and following the guidance of reason, and being always intent on this, contemplating that which is true and divine, and not subject to opinion, and being nourished by it, it thinks that it ought to live in this manner as long as it does live, and that when it dies it shall go to a kindred essence, and one like itself, and shall be freed from human evils. From such a regimen as this the soul has no occasion to fear, Simmias and Cebes, while it strictly attends to these things, lest being torn to pieces at its departure from the body it should be blown about and dissipated by the winds, and no longer have an existence any where."

When Socrates had thus spoken, a long silence ensued; and Socrates himself was pondering upon what had been said, as he appeared, and so did most of us: but Cebes and Simmias were conversing a little while with each other. At length Socrates perceiving them, said, "What think you of what has been said? does it appear to you to have been proved sufficiently? for many doubts and objections still remain if any one will examine them thoroughly. If, then, you are considering some other subject, I have nothing to say; but if you are doubting about this, do not hesitate both yourselves to speak and express your opinion, if it appears to you in any respect that it might have been argued better, and to call me in again to your assistance, if you think you can be at all benefited by my help."

Upon this Simmias said, "Indeed, Socrates, I will tell you the truth: for some time each of us, being in doubt, has been urging and exhorting the other to question you, from a desire to hear our doubts solved, but we were afraid of giving you trouble, lest it should be disagreeable to you in your present circumstances."

But he, upon hearing this, gently smiled, and said, "Bless me, Simmias; with difficulty indeed, could I persuade other men that I do not consider my present condition a calamity, since I am not able to persuade even you; but you are afraid lest I should be more morose now than during the former part of my life.

And, as it seems, I appear to you to be inferior to swans with respect to divination, who, when they perceive that they must needs die, though they have been used to sing before, sing then more than ever, rejoicing that 85
they are about to depart to that deity whose servants they are. But men, through their own fear of death, belie the swans too, and say that they, lamenting their death, sing their last song through grief, and they do not consider that no bird sings when it is hungry or cold, or is afflicted with any other pain, not even the nightingale, or swallow, or the hoopoes, which they say sing lamenting through grief. But neither do these birds appear to me to sing through sorrow, nor yet do swans; but in my opinion, belonging to Apollo, they are prophetic, and foreseeing the blessings of Hades, they sing and rejoice on that day more excellently than at any preceding time. But I too consider myself to be a fellow-servant of the swans, and sacred to the same god, and that I have received the power of divination from our common master no less than they, and that I do not depart from this life with less spirits than they. On this account, therefore, it is right that you should both speak and ask whatever you please, as long as the Athenian Eleven permit."

"You say well," said Simmias, "and both I will tell you what are my doubts, and he in turn how far he does not assent to what has been said. For it appears to me, Socrates, probably as it does to you with respect to these matters, that to know them clearly in the present life is either impossible, or very difficult: on the other hand, however, not to test what has been said of them in every possible way, so as not to desist until on examining them in every point of view, one has exhausted every effort, is the part of a very weak man. For we ought with respect to these things, either to learn from others how they stand, or to discover them for one's-self, or, if both these are impossible, then, taking the best of human reasonings and that which is the most difficult to be confuted, and embarking on this, as one who risks himself on a raft, so to sail through life, unless one could be carried more safely, and with

less risk, on a surer conveyance or some divine reason. I, therefore, shall not now be ashamed to question you, since you bid me do so, nor shall I blame myself hereafter, for not having now told you what I think; for to me, Socrates, when I consider the matter, both with myself and with Cebes, what has been said does not appear to have been sufficiently proved."

Then said Socrates, "Perhaps, my friend, you have the truth on your side; but tell me in what respect it was not sufficiently proved."

"In this," he answered, "because any one might use the same argument with respect to harmony, and a lyre, and its chords, that harmony is something invisible and incorporeal, very beautiful and divine, in a well-
86 modulated lyre: but the lyre and its chords are bodies, and of corporeal form, compounded and earthly, and akin to that which is mortal. When any one, then, has either broken the lyre, or cut or burst the chords, he might maintain from the same reasoning as yours, that it is necessary the harmony should still exist and not be destroyed; for there could be no possibility that the lyre should subsist any longer when the chords are burst, and that the chords which are of a mortal nature should subsist, but that the harmony, which is of the same nature and akin to that which is divine and immortal, should become extinct, and perish before that which is mortal; but he might say that the harmony must needs subsist somewhere, and that the wood and chords must decay, before it can undergo any change. For I think, Socrates, that you yourself have arrived at this conclusion, that we consider the soul to be pretty much of this kind, namely, that our body being compacted and held together by heat and cold, dryness and moisture, and other such qualities, our soul is the fusion and harmony of these, when they are well and duly combined with each other. If then, the soul is a kind of harmony, it is evident that when our body is unduly relaxed or strained through diseases and other maladies, the soul must of necessity immediately perish, although it is most divine, just as other harmonies which subsist in sounds or in the various works of artizans, but that

the remains of the body of each person last for a long time, till they are either burnt or decayed. Consider then what we shall say to this reasoning, if any one should maintain that the soul being a fusion of the several qualities in the body, perishes first in that which is called death."

Socrates, therefore, looking steadfastly at us, as he was generally accustomed to do, and smiling, said, "Simmias indeed speaks justly. If then, any one of you is more prompt than I am, why does he not answer? for he seems to have handled my argument not badly. It appears to me, however, that before we make our reply we should first hear from Cebes, what he too objects to our argument, in order that, some time intervening, we may consider what we shall say, and then when we have heard them, we may give up to them, if they appear to speak agreeably to truth, or if not, we may then uphold our own argument. Come then, Cebes," he continued, "say what it is that disturbs you, so as to cause your unbelief."

"I will tell you," said Cebes; "the argument seems to me to rest where it was, and to be liable to the same objection that we mentioned before. For, that our soul 87
existed even before it came into this present form, I do not deny has been very elegantly, and, if it is not too much to say so, very fully demonstrated: but that it still exists any where when we are dead, does not appear to me to have been clearly proved; nor do I give in to the objection of Simmias, that the soul is not stronger and more durable than the body, for it appears to me to excel very far all things of this kind. 'Why then,' reason might say, 'do you still disbelieve? for, since you see that when a man dies his weaker part still exists, does it not appear to you to be necessary that the more durable part should still be preserved during this period?' Consider then, whether I say any thing to the purpose in reply to this. For I too, as well as Simmias, as it seems, stand in need of an illustration: for the argument appears to me to have been put thus, as if any one should advance this argument about an aged weaver who had died, that the man has not yet

perished, but perhaps still exists somewhere; and as a proof, should exhibit the garment which he wore and had woven himself, that it is entire and has not perished; and if any one should disbelieve him he would ask, whether of the two is the more durable, the species of a man or of a garment, that is constantly in use and being worn; then should any one answer, that the species of man is much more durable, he would think it demonstrated, that beyond all question the man is preserved, since that which is less durable has not perished. But I do not think, Simmias, that this is the case, and do you consider what I say, for every one must think that he who argues thus argues foolishly. For this weaver, having worn and woven many such garments, perished after almost all of them, but before the last I suppose, and yet it does not on this account follow any the more that a man is inferior to or weaker than a garment. And I think the soul might admit this same illustration with respect to the body, and he who should say the same things concerning them would appear to me to speak correctly, that the soul is more durable, but the body weaker and less durable; for he would say that each soul wears out many bodies, especially if it lives many years; for, if the body wastes and is dissolved while the man still lives, but the soul continually weaves anew what is worn out, it must necessarily follow that when the soul is dissolved it must then have on its last garment, and perish before this alone; but when the soul has perished the body would show the weakness of its nature, and quickly rot and vanish. So that it is not by any means right to place implicit reliance on this argument, and to believe that when we die our soul
88 still exists somewhere. For, if any one should concede to him who admits even more than you do, and should grant to him that not only did our soul exist before we were born, but that even when we die nothing hinders the souls of some of us from still existing, and continuing to exist hereafter, and from being often born, and dying again; for so strong is it by nature, that it can hold out against repeated births; if he granted this, he would not yet concede that it does not exhaust itself in

its many births, and at length perish altogether in some one of the deaths. But he would say that no one knows this death and dissolution of the body, which brings destruction to the soul; for it is impossible for any one of us to perceive it. If, however, this be the case, it follows that every one who is confident at the approach of death is foolishly confident, unless he is able to prove that the soul is absolutely immortal and imperishable: otherwise it necessarily follows that he who is about to die must be alarmed for his soul, lest in its present disunion from the body it should entirely perish."

Upon this, all of us who had heard them speaking were disagreeably affected, as we afterwards mentioned to each other; because, after we had been fully persuaded by the former arguments, they seemed to disturb us anew, and to cast us into a distrust, not only of the arguments already adduced, but of such as might afterwards be urged, for fear lest we should not be fit judges of any thing, or lest the things themselves should be incredible.

Ech. By the gods, Phædo, I can readily excuse you: for, while I am now hearing you, it occurs to me to ask myself some such question as this, What arguments can we any longer believe? since the argument which Socrates advanced, and which was exceedingly credible, has now fallen into discredit. For this argument, that our soul is a kind of harmony, produces a wonderful impression on me, both now and always, and in being mentioned, it has reminded me, as it were, that I too was formerly of the same opinion: so that I stand in need again, as if from the very beginning, of some other argument which may persuade me that the soul of one who dies does not die with the body. Tell me therefore, by Jupiter, how Socrates followed up the argument; and whether he too, as you confess was the case with yourselves, seemed disconcerted at all, or not, but calmly maintained his position; and maintained it sufficiently, or defectively. Relate every thing to me as accurately as you can.

Phæd. Indeed, Echecrates, though I have often admired Socrates, I was never more delighted than at

being with him on that occasion. That he should be
89 able to say something is perhaps not at all surprising; but I especially admired this in him, first of all that he listened to the argument of the young men so sweetly, affably, and approvingly; in the next place, that he so quickly perceived how we were affected by their arguments; and lastly, that he cured us so well and recalled us, when we were put to flight as it were and vanquished, and encouraged us to accompany him, and consider the argument with him.

Ech. How was that?

Phæd. I will tell you: I happened to be sitting at his right hand, near the bed, upon a low seat, but he himself sat much higher than I. Stroking my head, then, and laying hold of the hair that hung on my neck, for he used, often, to play with my hairs, "To-morrow," he said, "perhaps, Phædo, you will cut off these beautiful locks?"

"It seems likely, Socrates," said I.

"Not if you are persuaded by me."

"Why so?" I asked.

"To-day," he replied, "both I ought to cut off mine and you yours, if our argument must die, and we are unable to revive it. And I, if I were you, and the arguments were to escape me, would take an oath, as the Argives do, not to suffer my hair to grow until I had renewed the contest, and vanquished the arguments of Simmias and Cebes."

"But," I said, "even Hercules himself is said not to have been a match for two."

"Call upon me, then," he said, "as your Iolaus, while it is yet day."

"I do call on you, then," I said, "not as Hercules upon Iolaus, but as Iolaus upon Hercules."

"It will make no difference," he replied. "But first of all we must beware lest we meet with some mischance."

"What?" I asked.

"That we do not become," he answered, "haters of reasoning as some become haters of men; for no greater evil can happen to any one than to hate reasoning.

But hatred of reasoning and hatred of mankind both spring from the same source. For hatred of mankind is produced in us from having placed too great reliance on some one without sufficient knowledge of him, and from having considered him to be a man altogether true, sincere, and faithful, and then after a little while finding him depraved and unfaithful, and after him another. And when a man has often experienced this, and especially from those whom he considered his most intimate and best friends, at length, having frequently stumbled, he hates all men, and thinks that there is no soundness at all in any of them. Have you not perceived that this happens so?"

"Certainly," I replied.

"Is it not a shame?" he said, "and is it not evident that such a one attempts to deal with men, without sufficient knowledge of human affairs? For if he had dealt with them with competent knowledge, as the case really is, so he would have considered that the good and the bad are each very few in number, and that those between both are most numerous."

"How say you?" I asked.

"In the same manner," he replied, "as with things very little and very large. Do you think that any thing is more rare than to find a very large or a very little man, or dog, or any thing else? and again swift or slow, beautiful or ugly, white or black? Do you not perceive that of all such things the extremes are rare 90
and few, but that the intermediate are abundant and numerous?"

"Certainly," I replied.

"Do you not think, then," he continued, "that if a contest in wickedness were proposed, even here very few would be found pre-eminent?"

"It is probable," I said.

"It is so," he said; "but in this respect reasonings do not resemble men, for I was just now following you as my leader, but in this they do resemble them, when any one believes in any argument as true without being skilled in the art of reasoning, and then shortly afterwards it appears to him to be false, at one time being

so and at another time not, and so on with one after another; and especially they who devote themselves to controversial arguments, you are aware at length that they have become very wise, and have alone discovered that there is nothing sound and stable either in things or reasonings, but that all things that exist, as is the case with the Euripus, are in a constant state of flux and reflux, and never continue in any one condition for any length of time."

"You speak perfectly true," I said.

"Would it not then, Phædo," he said, "be a sad thing if, when there is a true and sound reasoning, and such as one can understand, one should then, through lighting upon such arguments as appear to be at one time true, and at another false, not blame one's-self and one's own want of skill, but at length through grief should anxiously transfer the blame from one's-self to the arguments, and thereupon pass the rest of one's life in hating and reviling arguments, and so be deprived of the truth and knowledge of things that exist?"

"By Jupiter," I said, "it would be sad indeed."

"In the first place, then," he said, "let us beware of this, and let us not admit into our souls the notion that there appears to be nothing sound in reasoning, but much rather that we are not yet in a sound condition, and that we ought vigorously and strenuously to endeavour to become sound, you and the others on account of your whole future life, but I on account of
91 my death, since I am in danger at the present time of not behaving as becomes a philosopher with respect to this very subject, but as a wrangler like those who are utterly uninformed. For they, when they dispute about any thing, care nothing at all for the subject about which the discussion is, but are anxious about this, that what they have themselves advanced shall appear true to the persons present. And I seem to myself on the present occasion to differ from them only in this respect; for I shall not be anxious to make what I say appear true to those who are present, except that may happen by the way, but that it may appear certainly

to be so to myself. For I thus reason, my dear friend, and observe how interestedly, if what I say be true, it is well to be persuaded of it; but if nothing remains to one that is dead, I shall at least during the interval before death, be less disagreeable to those present by my lamentations. But this ignorance of mine will not continue long, for that would be bad, but will shortly be put an end to. Thus prepared then, Simmias and Cebes," he continued, "I now proceed to my argument. Do you however, if you will be persuaded by me, pay little attention to Socrates, but much more to the truth, and if I appear to you to say any thing true, assent to it, but if not, oppose me with all your might, taking good care that in my zeal I do not deceive both myself and you, and like a bee depart leaving my sting behind.

"But let us proceed," he said; "first of all, remind me of what you said, if I should appear to have forgotten it. For Simmias, as I think, is in doubt and fears lest the soul, though more divine and beautiful than the body, should perish before it, as being a species of harmony. But Cebes appeared to me to grant me this, that the soul is more durable than the body, but he argued that it is uncertain to every one, whether when the soul has worn out many bodies, and that repeatedly, it does not, on leaving the last body, itself also perish, so that this very thing is death, the destruction of the soul, since the body never ceases decaying. Are not these the things, Simmias and Cebes, which we have to inquire into?"

They both agreed that they were.

"Whether then," he continued, "do you reject all our former arguments, or some of them only, and not others?"

"Some we do," they replied, "and others not."

"What then," he proceeded, "do you say about that argument, in which we asserted that knowledge is reminiscence, and that, this being the case, our soul must necessarily have existed somewhere before it was enclosed in the body?" 92

"I, indeed," replied Cebes, "was both then wonder-

fully persuaded by it, and now persist in it, as in no other argument."

"And I too," said Simmias, "am of the same mind, and should very much wonder if I should ever think otherwise on that point."

"Then," Socrates said, "you must needs think otherwise, my Theban friend, if this opinion holds good, that harmony is something compounded, and that the soul is a kind of harmony that results from the parts compacted together in the body. For surely you will not allow yourself to say that harmony was composed prior to the things from which it required to be composed. Would you allow this?"

"By no means, Socrates," he replied.

"Do you perceive then," he said, "that this results from what you say, when you assert that the soul existed before it came into a human form and body, but that it was composed from things that did not yet exist? For harmony is not such as that to which you compare it; but first the lyre, and the chords, and the sounds yet unharmonized, exist, and last of all harmony is produced, and first perishes. How then will this argument accord with that?"

"Not at all," said Simmias.

"And yet," he said, "if in any argument, there ought to be an accordance in one respecting harmony."

"There ought," said Simmias.

"This of yours however," he said, "is not in accordance. Consider then, which of these two statements do you prefer, that knowledge is reminiscence, or the soul harmony?"

"The former, by far, Socrates," he replied, "for the latter occurred to me without demonstration, through a certain probability and speciousness whence most men derive their opinions. But I am well aware that arguments which draw their demonstrations from probabilities are idle; and unless one is on one's guard against them, they are very deceptive, both in geometry and all other subjects. But the argument respecting reminiscence and knowledge may be said to have been demonstrated by a satisfactory hypothesis. For in this way

it was said that our soul existed before it came into the body, because the essence that bears the appellation of 'that which is,' belongs to it. But of this, as I persuade myself, I am fully and rightly convinced. It is therefore necessary, as it seems, that I should neither allow myself nor any one else to maintain that the soul is harmony."

"But what, Simmias," said he, "if you consider it thus? Does it appear to you to appertain to harmony, or to any other composition, to subsist in any other way than the very things do of which it is composed?" 93

"By no means."

"And indeed, as I think, neither to do any thing, nor suffer any thing else, besides what they do or suffer."

He agreed.

"It does not, therefore, appertain to harmony to take the lead of the things of which it is composed, but to follow them."

He assented.

"It is then far from being the case that harmony is moved or sends forth sounds contrariwise, or is in any other respect opposed to its parts?"

"Far indeed," he said.

"What then? is not every harmony naturally harmony, so far as it has been made to accord?"

"I do not understand you," he replied.

"Whether," he said, "if it should be in a greater degree and more fully to accord, supposing that were possible, would the harmony be greater and more full, but if in a less degree and less fully, then would it be inferior and less full?"

"Certainly."

"Is this then the case with the soul, that, even in the smallest extent, one soul is more fully and in a greater degree, or less fully and in a less degree this very thing, a soul, than another?"

"In no respect whatever," he replied.

"Well then," he said, "by Jupiter, is one soul said to possess intelligence and virtue, and to be good, and another folly and vice, and to be bad? and is this said with truth?"

"With truth, certainly."

"Of those, then, who maintain that the soul is harmony, what will any one say that these things are in the soul, virtue and vice? Will he call them another kind of harmony and discord? and say that the one, the good soul, is harmonized, and, being harmony, contains within itself another harmony, but that the other is discordant, and does not contain within itself another harmony?"

"I am unable to say," replied Simmias, "but it is clear that he who maintains that opinion would say something of the kind."

"But it has been already granted," said he, "that one soul is not more or less a soul than another; and this is an admission that one harmony is not to a greater degree or more fully, or to a less degree or less fully, a harmony, than another: is it not so?"

"Certainly."

"And that that which is neither more nor less harmony, is neither more nor less harmonized: is it so?"

"It is."

"But does that which is neither more nor less harmonized partake of more or less harmony, or an equal amount?"

"An equal amount."

"A soul, therefore, since it is not more or less this very thing, a soul, than another, is not more or less harmonized?"

"Even so."

"Such then being its condition, it cannot partake of a greater degree of discord or harmony?"

"Certainly not."

"And again, such being its condition, can one soul partake of a greater degree of vice or virtue than another, if vice be discord, and virtue harmony?"

"It cannot."

94 "Or rather, surely, Simmias, according to right reason, no soul will partake of vice, if it is harmony: for doubtless harmony, which is perfectly such, can never partake of discord?"

"Certainly not."

"Neither, therefore, can a soul, which is perfectly a soul, partake of vice."

"How can it, from what has been already said?"

"From this reasoning, then, all souls of all animals will be equally good, if at least they are by nature equally this very thing, souls?"

"It appears so to me, Socrates," he said.

"And does it appear to you," he said, "to have been thus rightly argued, and that the argument would lead to this result, if the hypothesis were correct, that the soul is harmony?"

"On no account whatever," he replied.

"But what," said he, "of all the things that are in man, is there any thing else that you say bears rule except the soul, especially if it be wise?"

"I should say not."

"Whether by yielding to the passions in the body, or by opposing them? My meaning is this: for instance, when heat and thirst are present, by drawing it the contrary way, so as to hinder it from drinking, and when hunger is present, by hindering it from eating; and in ten thousand other instances we see the soul opposing the desires of the body. Do we not?"

"Certainly."

"But have we not before allowed that if the soul were harmony, it would never utter a sound contrary to the tension, relaxation, vibration, or any other affection to which its component parts are subject, but would follow, and never govern them?"

"We did allow it," he replied, "for how could we do otherwise?"

"What, then, does not the soul now appear to act quite the contrary, ruling over all the parts, from which any one might say it subsists, and resisting almost all of them through the whole of life, and exercising dominion over them in all manner of ways, punishing some more severely even with pain, both by gymnastics and medicine, and others more mildly, partly threatening, and partly admonishing the desires, angers, and fears, as if, being itself of a different nature, it were conversing with something quite different? Just as

Homer has done in the Odyssey, where he speaks of Ulysses: 'Having struck his breast, he chid his heart in the following words, Bear up, my heart; ere this thou hast borne far worse.' Do you think that he composed this in the belief that the soul was harmony, and capable of being led by the passions of the body, and not rather that it was able to lead and govern them, as being something much more divine than to be compared with harmony?"

"By Jupiter, Socrates, it appears so to me."

"Therefore, my excellent friend, it is on no account
95 correct for us to say that the soul is a kind of harmony; for as it appears, we should neither agree with Homer, that divine poet, nor with ourselves."

"Such is the case," he replied.

"Be it so, then," said Socrates, "we have already, as it seems, sufficiently appeased this Theban harmony. But how, Cebes, and by what arguments shall we appease this Cadmus?"

"You appear to me," replied Cebes, "to be likely to find out; for you have made out this argument against harmony wonderfully beyond my expectation. For when Simmias was saying what his doubts were, I wondered very much whether any one would be able to answer his reasoning. It therefore appeared to me unaccountable that he did not withstand the very first onset of your argument. I should not, therefore, be surprised if the arguments of Cadmus met with the same fate."

"My good friend," said Socrates, "do not speak so boastfully, lest some envious power should overthrow the argument that is about to be urged. These things, however, will be cared for by the deity, but let us, meeting hand to hand, in the manner of Homer, try whether you say any thing to the purpose. This, then, is the sum of what you inquire: you require it to be proved that our soul is imperishable and immortal; if a philosopher that is about to die, full of confidence and hope that after death he shall be far happier than if he had died after leading a different kind of life, shall not entertain this confidence foolishly and vainly. But to

show that the soul is something strong and divine, and that it existed before we men were born, you say not at all hinders, but that all these things may evince, not its immortality, but that the soul is durable, and existed an immense space of time before, and knew and did many things. But that, for all this, it was not at all the more immortal, but that its very entrance into the body of a man was the beginning of its destruction, as if it were a disease, so that it passes through this life in wretchedness, and at last perishes in that which is called death. But you say that it is of no consequence whether it comes into a body once or often, with respect to our occasion of fear: for it is right he should be afraid, unless he is foolish, who does not know, and cannot give a reason to prove, that the soul is immortal. Such, I think, Cebes, is the sum of what you say; and I purposely repeat it often, that nothing may escape us, and, if you please, you may add to or take from it."

Cebes replied, "I do not wish at present either to take from or add to it; that is what I mean."

Socrates, then, having paused for some time, and considered something within himself, said, "You inquire into no easy matter, Cebes; for it is absolutely necessary to discuss the whole question of generation and corruption. If you please, then, I will relate to you 96
what happened to me with reference to them; and afterwards, if any thing that I shall say shall appear to you useful, towards producing conviction on the subject you are now treating of, make use of it."

"I do indeed wish it," replied Cebes.

"Hear my relation then. When I was a young man, Cebes, I was wonderfully desirous of that wisdom which they call a history of nature: for it appeared to me to be a very sublime thing to know the causes of every thing, why each thing is generated, why it perishes, and why it exists. And I often tossed myself upwards and downwards, considering first such things as these, whether when heat and cold have undergone a certain corruption, as some say, then animals are formed; and whether the blood is that by means of which we think, or air, or fire, or none of these, but that it is the brain

that produces the perceptions of hearing, seeing, and smelling, and that from these come memory and opinion, and from memory and opinion, when in a state of rest, in the same way knowledge is produced? And again considering the corruptions of these, and the affections incidental to the heavens and the earth, I at length appeared to myself so unskilful in these speculations, that nothing could be more so. But I will give you a sufficient proof of this: for I then became, by these very speculations, so very blind with respect to things which I knew clearly before, as it appeared to myself and others, that I unlearnt even the things which I thought I knew before, both on many other subjects and also this, why a man grows. For before I thought this was evident to every one, that it proceeds from eating and drinking; for that, when, from the food, flesh is added to flesh, bone to bone, and so on in the same proportion, what is proper to them is added to the several other parts, then the bulk which was small becomes afterwards large, and thus that a little man becomes a big one. Such was my opinion at that time: does it appear to you correct?"

"To me it does," said Cebes.

"Consider this further. I thought that I had formed a right opinion, when on seeing a tall man standing by a short one, I judged that he was taller by the head, and in like manner one horse than another: and still more clearly than this, ten appeared to me to be more than eight, by two being added to them, and that two cubits are greater than one cubit, by exceeding it a half."

"But now," said Cebes, "what think you of these matters?"

"By Jupiter," said he, "I am far from thinking that I know the cause of these, for that I cannot even persuade myself of this, when a person has added one to one, whether the one to which the addition has been made has become two, or whether that which has been added, and that to which the addition has been made,
97 have become two by the addition of the one to the other. For I wonder, if when each of these was

separate from the other, each was one, and they were not yet two, but when they have approached nearer each other, this should be the cause of their becoming two, namely, the union by which they have been placed nearer one another. Nor yet, if any person should divide one, am I able to persuade myself that this, their division, is the cause of its becoming two. For this cause is the contrary to the former one of their becoming two; for then it was because they were brought nearer to each other, and the one was added to the other; but now it is, because one is removed and separated from the other. Nor do I yet persuade myself, that I know why one is one, nor, in a word, why any thing else is produced or perishes, or exists, according to this method of proceeding; but I mix up another method of my own at random, for this I can on no account give in to.

"But having once heard a person reading from a book, written, as he said, by Anaxagoras,* and which said that it is intelligence that sets in order and is the cause of all things, I was delighted with this cause, and it appeared to me in a manner to be well that intelligence should be the cause of all things, and I considered with myself, if this is so, that the regulating intelligence orders all things, and disposes each in such way as will be best for it. If any one, then, should desire to discover the cause of every thing, in what way it is produced, or perishes, or exists, he must discover this respecting it, in what way it is best for it either to exist, or to suffer, or do anything else; from this mode of reasoning, then, it is proper that a man should consider nothing else, both with respect to himself and others, than what is most excellent and best: and it necessarily follows that this same person must also know that which is worst, for that the knowledge of both of them is the same. Thus reasoning with myself, I was delighted to think I had found in Anaxagoras a preceptor who would instruct me in the causes of things, agreeably to my own mind, and that he would inform me, first, whether the earth is flat or round, and when he had informed me, would moreover explain

* 500-428 BC

the cause and necessity of its being so, arguing on the principle of the better, and showing that it is better for it to be such as it is, and if he should say that it is in the middle, that he would moreover explain how it is better for it to be in the middle; and if he should make all this clear to me, I was prepared no longer to require any other species of cause. I was in like manner pre-
98 pared to inquire respecting the sun, and moon, and the other stars, with respect to their velocities in reference to each other and their revolutions, and other conditions, in what way it is better for both to act and be affected as it does and is. For I never thought that after he had said that these things were set in order by intelligence, he would introduce any other cause for them than that it is best for them to be as they are: hence, I thought, that in assigning the cause to each of them, and to all in common, he would explain that which is best for each, and the common good of all. And I would not have given up my hopes for a good deal, but having taken up his books with great eagerness, I read through them as quickly as I could, that I might as soon as possible know the best, and the worst.

"From this wonderful hope, however, my friend, I was speedily thrown down, when, as I advance and read over his works, I meet with a man who makes no use of intelligence, nor assigns any causes for the ordering of all things, but makes the causes to consist of air, ether, and water, and many other things equally absurd. And he appeared to me to be very like one who should say, that whatever Socrates does he does by intelligence, and then, attempting to describe the causes of each particular action, should say, first of all, that for this reason I am now sitting here, because my body is composed of bones and sinews, and that the bones are hard, and have joints separate from each other, but that the sinews, being capable of tension and contraction, cover the bones, together with the flesh and skin which contains them. The bones, therefore, being suspended in their sockets, the nerves relaxing and tightening enable me to bend my limbs as I now do,

and from this cause I sit here bent up. And if again, he should assign other similar causes for my conversing with you, assigning as causes voice, and air, and hearing, and ten thousand other things of the kind, omitting to mention the real causes, that since it appeared better to the Athenians to condemn me, I therefore thought it better to sit here, and more just to remain and submit to the punishment which they have ordered; for, by the dog, I think these sinews and bones would have been long ago either in Megara or Bœotia, borne thither 99
by an opinion of that which is best, if I had not thought it more just and honourable to submit to whatever sentence the city might order, than to flee and run stealthily away. But to call such things causes is too absurd. But if any one should say that without possessing such things as bones and sinews, and whatever else I have, I could not do what I pleased, he would speak the truth; but to say that I do as I do through them, and that I act thus by intelligence, and not from the choice of what is best, would be a great and extreme disregard of reason. For this would be not to be able to distinguish that the real cause is one thing, and that another without which a cause could not be a cause: which indeed the generality of men appear to me to do, fumbling as it were in the dark, and making use of strange names, so as to denominate them as the very cause. Wherefore one encompassing the earth with a vortex from heaven, makes the earth remain fixed; but another, as if it were a broad trough, rests it upon the air as its base: but the power by which these things are now so disposed that they may be placed in the best manner possible, this they neither inquire into, nor do they think that it requires any superhuman strength; but they think they will some time or other find out an Atlas stronger and more immortal than this, and more capable of containing all things, and in reality, the good, and that which ought to hold them together and contain them, they take no account of at all. I then should most gladly have become the disciple of any one who would teach me of such a cause, in what way it is. But when I was disappointed of this, and

was neither able to discover it myself, nor to learn it from another, do you wish, Cebes, that I should show you in what way I set out upon a second voyage in search of the cause?"

"I wish it exceedingly," he replied.

"It appeared to me then," said he, "after this, when I was wearied with considering things that exist, that I ought to beware lest I should suffer in the same way as they do who look at and examine an eclipse of the sun, for some lose the sight of their eyes, unless they behold its image in water, or some similar medium. And I was affected with a similar feeling, and was afraid lest I should be utterly blinded in my soul through beholding things with the eyes, and endeavouring to grasp them by means of the several senses. It seemed to me, therefore, that I ought to have recourse to reasons, and to consider in them the truth of things. Perhaps, however, this similitude of mine may in some
100 respect be incorrect; for I do not altogether admit that he who considers things in their reasons considers them in their images, more than he does who views them in their effects. However, I proceeded thus, and on each occasion laying down the reason, which I deem to be the strongest, whatever things appear to me to accord with this I regard as true, both with respect to the cause and every thing else, but such as do not accord I regard as not true. But I wish to explain my meaning to you in a clearer manner; for I think that you do not yet understand me."

"No, by Jupiter," said Cebes, "not well."

"However," continued he, "I am now saying nothing new, but what I have always at other times, and in a former part of this discussion, never ceased to say. I proceed then to attempt to explain to you that species of cause which I have busied myself about, and return again to those well-known subjects, and set out from them, laying down as an hypothesis, that there is a certain abstract beauty, and goodness, and magnitude, and so of all other things; which if you grant me, and allow that they do exist, I hope that I shall be able from these to explain the cause to you, and to discover that the soul is immortal."

"But," said Cebes, "since I grant you this, you may draw your conclusion at once."

"But consider," he said, "what follows from thence, and see if you can agree with me. For it appears to me, that if there be any thing else beautiful, besides beauty itself, it is not beautiful for any other reason than because it partakes of that abstract beauty; and I say the same of every thing. Do you admit such a cause?"

"I do admit it," he replied.

"I do not yet understand," he continued, "nor am I able to conceive, those other wise causes; but if any one should tell me why any thing is beautiful, either because it has a blooming florid colour, or figure, or any thing else of the kind, I dismiss all other reasons, for I am confounded by them all; but I simply, wholly, and perhaps foolishly, confine myself to this, that nothing else causes it to be beautiful, except either the presence or communication of that abstract beauty, by whatever means and in whatever way communicated: for I cannot yet affirm this with certainty, but only that by means of beauty all beautiful things become beautiful. For this appears to me the safest answer to give both to myself and others, and adhering to this, I think that I shall never fall, but that it is a safe answer both for me and any one else to give, that by means of beauty beautiful things become beautiful. Does it not also seem so to you?"

"It does."

"And that by magnitude great things become great, and greater things, greater; and by littleness less things become less?"

"Yes."

"You would not then approve of it, if any one said that one person is greater than another by the head, and that the less is less by the very same thing, but you would maintain that you mean nothing else than that 101
every thing that is greater than another is greater by nothing else than magnitude, and that it is greater on this account, that is on account of magnitude, and that the less is less by nothing else than littleness, and on this account less, that is, on account of littleness, being

afraid, I think, lest some opposite argument should meet you if you should say that any one is greater and less by the head; as first, that the greater is greater, and the less less, by the very same thing; and next, that the greater is greater by the head, which is small; and that it is monstrous to suppose that any one is great through something small. Should you not be afraid of this?"

To which said Cebes, smilingly, "Indeed I should."

"Should you not, then," he continued, "be afraid to say that ten is more than eight by two, and for this cause exceeds it, and not by number, and on account of number? and that two cubits are greater than one cubit by half, and not by magnitude? for the fear is surely the same."

"Certainly," he replied.

"What then? when one has been added to one, would you not beware of saying that the addition is the cause of its being two, or division when it has been divided; and would you not loudly assert that you know no other way in which each thing subsists, than by partaking of the peculiar essence of each of which it partakes, and that in these cases you can assign no other cause of its becoming two than its partaking of duality; and that such things as are to become two must needs partake of this, and what is to become one, of unity; but these divisions and additions, and other such subtleties, you would dismiss, leaving them to be given as answers by persons wiser than yourself: whereas you, fearing, as it is said, your own shadow and inexperience, would adhere to this safe hypothesis, and answer accordingly? But if any one should assail this hypothesis of yours, would you not dismiss him and refrain from answering him till you had considered the consequences resulting from it, whether in your opinion they agree with or differ from each other? But when it should be necessary for you to give a reason for it, would you give one in a similar way, by again laying down another hypothesis, which should appear the best of higher principles, until you arrived at something satisfactory, but at the same time you would avoid

making confusion, as disputants do, in treating of the first principle and the results arising from it, if you really desire to arrive at the truth of things. For they, perhaps, make no account at all of this, nor pay any attention to it, for they are able, through their wisdom, to mingle all things together, and at the same time please themselves. But you, if you are a philosopher, 102
would act, I think, as I now describe."

"You speak most truly," said Simmias and Cebes together.

Ech. By Jupiter, Phædo, they said so with good reason: for he appears to me to have explained these things with wonderful clearness, even to one endued with a small degree of intelligence.

Phæd. Certainly, Echecrates, and so it appeared to all who were present.

Ech. And so it appears to me, who was absent, and now hear it related. But what was said after this?

Phæd. As well as I remember, when these things had been granted him, and it was allowed that each several idea exists of itself, and that other things partaking of them receive their denomination from them, he next asked: "If then," he said, "you admit that these things are so, whether, when you say that Simmias is greater than Socrates, but less than Phædo, do you not then say that magnitude and littleness are both in Simmias?"

"I do."

"And yet," he said, "you must confess that Simmias's exceeding Socrates is not actually true in the manner in which the words express it; for Simmias does not naturally exceed Socrates, in that he is Simmias, but in consequence of the magnitude which he happens to have; nor, again, does he exceed Socrates, because Socrates is Socrates, but because Socrates possesses littleness in comparison with his magnitude?"

"True."

"Nor, again, is Simmias exceeded by Phædo, because Phædo is Phædo, but because Phædo possesses magnitude in comparison with Simmias's littleness?"

"It is so."

"Thus, then, Simmias has the appellation of being both little and great, being between both, by exceeding the littleness of one through his own magnitude, and to the other yielding a magnitude that exceeds his own littleness." And at the same time, smiling, he said, "I seem to speak with the precision of a short-hand writer; however, it is as I say."

He allowed it.

"But I say it for this reason, wishing you to be of the same opinion as myself. For it appears to me, not only that magnitude itself is never disposed to be at the same time great and little, but that magnitude in us never admits the little, nor is disposed to be exceeded, but one of two things, either to flee and withdraw when its contrary, the little, approaches it, or when it has actually come, to perish; but that it is not disposed, by sustaining and receiving littleness, to be different from what it was. Just as I, having received and sustained littleness, and still continuing the same person that I am, am this same little person: but that, while it is great, never endures to be little. And in like manner the little that is in us is not disposed at any time to become or to be great, nor is any thing else among contraries, while it continues what it was, at
103 the same time disposed to become and to be its contrary; but in this contingency it either departs or perishes."

"It appears so to me," said Cebes, "in every respect."

But some one of those present, on hearing this, I do not clearly remember who he was, said, "By the gods was not the very contrary of what is now asserted admitted in the former part of our discussion, that the greater is produced from the less, and the less from the greater, and in a word, that the very production of contraries is from contraries? But now it appears to me to be asserted that this can never be the case."

Upon this Socrates, having leant his head forward and listened, said, "You have reminded me in a manly way; you do not, however, perceive the difference between what is now and what was then asserted. For

then it was said, that a contrary thing is produced from a contrary; but now, that a contrary can never become contrary to itself, neither that which is in us, nor that which is in nature. For then, my friend, we spoke of things that have contraries, calling them by the appellation of those things; but now we are speaking of those very things, from the presence of which things so called receive their appellation, and of these very things we say that they are never disposed to admit of production from each other." And, at the same time looking at Cebes, "Has any thing that has been said, Cebes, disturbed you?"

"Indeed," said Cebes, "I am not at all so disposed; however, I by no means say that there are not many things that disturb me."

"Then," he continued, "we have quite agreed to this, that a contrary can never be contrary to itself."

"Most certainly," he replied.

"But further," he said, "consider whether you will agree with me in this also. Do you call heat and cold anything?"

"I do."

"The same as snow and fire?"

"By Jupiter, I do not."

"But heat is something different from fire, and cold something different from snow?"

"Yes."

"But this, I think, is apparent to you, that snow, while it is snow, can never, when it has admitted heat, as we said before, continue to be what it was, snow and hot, but, on the approach of heat, it must either withdraw or perish?"

"Certainly."

"And again, that fire, when cold approaches it, must either depart or perish; but that it will never endure, when it has admitted coldness, to continue what it was, fire and cold?"

"You speak truly," he said.

"It happens then," he continued, "with respect to some of such things, that not only is the idea itself always thought worthy of the same appellation, but

likewise something else which is not indeed that idea itself but constantly retains its form so long as it exists. What I mean will perhaps be clearer in the following examples. The odd in number must always possess the name by which we now call it; must it not?"

"Certainly."

"Must it alone of all things, for this I ask, or is there
104 any thing else, which is not the same as the odd, but yet which we must always call odd, together with its own name, because it is so constituted by nature, that it can never be without the odd? But this I say is the case with the number three, and many others. For consider with respect to the number three; does it not appear to you that it must always be called by its own name, as well as by that of the odd, which is not the same as the number three? Yet such is the nature of the number three, five, and the entire half of number, that though they are not the same as the odd, yet each of them is always odd. And again, two and four, and the whole other series of number, though not the same as the even, are nevertheless each of them always even: do you admit this or not?"

"How should I not?" he replied.

"Observe then," said he, "what I wish to prove. It is this, that it appears, not only that these contraries do not admit each other, but that even such things as are not contrary to each other, and yet always possess contraries, do not appear to admit that idea which is contrary to the idea that exists in themselves, but, when it approaches, perish or depart. Shall we not allow that the number three would first perish, and suffer any thing whatever, rather than endure, while it is still three, to become even?"

"Most certainly," said Cebes.

"And yet," said he, "the number two is not contrary to three."

"Surely not."

"Not only, then, do ideas that are contrary never allow the approach of each other, but some other things also do not allow the approach of contraries."

"You say very truly," he replied.

"Do you wish, then," he said, "that, if we are able, we should define what these things are?"

"Certainly."

"Would they not then, Cebes," he said, "be such things as whatever they occupy, compel that thing not only to retain its own idea, but also that of something which is always a contrary?"

"How do you mean?"

"As we just now said. For you know surely, that whatever things the idea of three occupies must of necessity not only be three, but also odd?"

"Certainly."

"To such a thing, then, we assert, that the idea contrary to that form which constitutes this can never come."

"It cannot."

"But did the odd make it so?"

"Yes."

"And is the contrary to this the idea of the even?"

"Yes."

"The idea of the even, then, will never come to the three?"

"No surely."

"Three, then, has no part in the even?"

"None whatever."

"The number three is uneven?"

"Yes."

"What therefore I said should be defined, namely, what things they are which, though not contrary to some particular thing, yet do not admit of the contrary itself, as in the present instance, the number three though not contrary to the even, does not any the more admit it, for it always brings the contrary with it, just as the number two does to the odd, fire to cold, and many other particulars; consider then, whether you 105
would thus define, not only that a contrary does not admit a contrary, but also that that which brings with it a contrary to that to which it approaches, will never admit the contrary of that which it brings with it. But call it to mind again, for it will not be useless to hear it often repeated. Five will not admit the idea of the

even, nor ten, its double, that of the odd. This double then, though it is itself contrary to something else, yet will not admit the idea of the odd; nor will half as much again, nor other things of the kind, such as the half and the third part admit the idea of the whole, if you follow me and agree with me that it is so."

"I entirely agree with you," he said, "and follow you."

"Tell me again, then," he said, "from the beginning; and do not answer me in the terms in which I put the question, but in different ones, imitating my example. For I say this because, besides that safe mode of answering, which I mentioned at first, from what has now been said, I see another no less safe one. For if you should ask me what that is, which if it be in the body will cause it to be hot, I should not give you that safe but unlearned answer, that it is heat, but one more elegant, from what we have just now said, that it is fire: nor, if you should ask me what that is, which if it be in the body, will cause it to be diseased, should I say that it is disease, but fever; nor, if you should ask what that is, which if it be in number, will cause it to be odd, should I say that it is unevenness, but unity, and so with other things. But consider whether you sufficiently understand what I mean."

"Perfectly so," he replied.

"Answer me then," he said, "what that is, which when it is in the body, the body will be alive?"

"Soul," he replied.

"Is not this, then, always the case?"

"How should it not be?" said he.

"Does the soul, then, always bring life to whatever it occupies?"

"It does indeed," he replied.

"Whether, then, is there any thing contrary to life or not?"

"There is," he replied.

"What?"

"Death."

"The soul, then, will never admit the contrary o

that which it brings with it, as has been already allowed?"

"Most assuredly," replied Cebes.

"What then? how do we denominate that which does not admit the idea of the even?"

"Uneven," he replied.

"And that which does not admit the just, nor the musical?"

"Unmusical," he said, "and unjust."

"Be it so. But what do we call that which does not admit death?"

"Immortal," he replied.

"Therefore does not the soul admit death?"

"No."

"Is the soul, then, immortal?"

"Immortal."

"Be it so," he said. "Shall we say then, that this has been now demonstrated? or how think you?"

"Most completely, Socrates."

"What then," said he, "Cebes, if it were necessary for the uneven to be imperishable, would the number 106
three be otherwise than imperishable?"

"How should it not?"

"If, therefore, it were also necessary that what is without heat should be imperishable, when any one should introduce heat to snow, would not the snow withdraw itself, safe and unmelted? For it would not perish; nor yet would it stay and admit the heat."

"You say truly," he replied.

"In like manner, I think, if that which is insusceptible of cold were imperishable, that when any thing cold approached the fire, it would neither be extinguished nor perish, but would depart quite safe."

"Of necessity," he said.

"Must we not then of necessity," he continued, "speak thus of that which is immortal? if that which is immortal is imperishable, it is impossible for the soul to perish, when death approaches it. For, from what has been said already, it will not admit death, nor will ever be dead, just as we said that three will never be even, nor again will the odd, nor will fire be cold, nor

yet the heat that is in fire. But some one may say, what hinders, though the odd can never become even by the approach of the even, as we have allowed, yet, when the odd is destroyed, that the even should succeed in its place? We could not contend with him who should make this objection, that it is not destroyed; for the uneven is not imperishable; since, if this were granted us, we might easily have contended, that on the approach of the even the odd and the three depart; and we might have contended in the same way with respect to fire, heat, and the rest; might we not?"

"Certainly."

"Wherefore, with respect to the immortal, if we have allowed that it is imperishable, the soul, in addition to its being immortal, must also be imperishable; if not, there will be need of other arguments."

"But there is no need," he said, "as far as that is concerned; for scarcely could any thing not admit of corruption, if that which is immortal and eternal is liable to it."

"The deity, indeed, I think," said Socrates, "and the idea itself of life, and if any thing else is immortal, must be allowed by all beings to be incapable of dissolution."

"By Jupiter," he replied, "by all men indeed, and still more, as I think, by the gods."

"Since, then, that which is immortal is also incorruptible, can the soul, since it is immortal, be any thing else than imperishable?"

"It must of necessity be so."

"When, therefore, death approaches a man, the mortal part of him, as it appears, dies, but the immortal part departs safe and uncorrupted, having withdrawn itself from death?"

"It appears so."

"The soul, therefore," he said, "Cebes, is most cer-
107 tainly immortal and imperishable, and our souls will really exist in Hades."

"Therefore, Socrates," he said, "I have nothing further to say against this, nor any reason for doubting your arguments. But if Simmias here or any one

else has any thing to say, it were well for him not to be silent: for I know not to what other opportunity beyond the present any one can defer it, who wishes either to speak or hear about these things."

"But indeed," said Simmias, "neither have I any reason to doubt what has been urged; yet from the magnitude of the subject discussed, and from my low opinion of human weakness, I am compelled still to retain a doubt within myself with respect to what has been said."

"Not only so, Simmias," said Socrates, "but you say this well, and moreover the first hypotheses, even though they are credible to you, should nevertheless be examined more carefully; and if you should investigate them sufficiently, I think you will follow my reasoning as far as it is possible for man to do so; and if this very point becomes clear, you will inquire no further."

"You speak truly," he said.

"But it is right, my friends," he said, "that we should consider this, that if the soul is immortal, it requires our care not only for the present time, which we call life, but for all time; and the danger would now appear to be dreadful, if one should neglect it. For if death were a deliverance from every thing, it would be a great gain for the wicked, when they die, to be delivered at the same time from the body, and from their vices together with the soul: but now, since it appears to be immortal, it can have no other refuge from evils, nor safety, except by becoming as good and wise as possible. For the soul goes to Hades, possessing nothing else but its discipline and education, which are said to be of the greatest advantage or detriment to the dead, on the very beginning of his journey thither. For thus it is said; that each person's demon who was assigned to him while living, when he dies conducts him to some place, where they that are assembled together must receive sentence and then proceed to Hades with that guide, who has been ordered to conduct them from hence thither. But there having received their deserts, and having remained the appointed time, another guide

brings them back hither again, after many and long revolution of time. The journey, then, is not such as
108 the Telephus of Æschylus describes it. For he says that a simple path leads to Hades; but it appears to me to be neither simple nor one: for there would be no need of guides, nor could any one ever miss the way, if there were but one. But now it appears to have many divisions and windings; and this I conjecture from our religious and funeral rites. The well-ordered and wise soul, then, both follows, and is not ignorant of its present condition; but that which through passion clings to the body, as I said before, having longingly fluttered about it for a long time, and about its visible place, after vehement resistance and great suffering, is forcibly and with great difficulty led away by its appointed demon. And when it arrives at the place where the others are, impure and having done any such thing as the committal of unrighteous murders or other similar actions, which are kindred to these, and are the deeds of kindred souls, every one shuns it and turns away from it, and will neither be its fellow-traveller or guide, but it wanders about, oppressed with every kind of helplessness until certain periods have elapsed: and when these are completed, it is carried of necessity to an abode suitable to it; but the soul which has passed through life with purity and moderation, having obtained the gods for its fellow-travellers and guides, settles each in the place suited to it. There are indeed many and wonderful places in the earth, and it is itself neither of such a kind, nor of such a magnitude, as is supposed by those who are accustomed to speak of the earth, as I have been persuaded by a certain person."

Whereupon Simmias said, "How mean you, Socrates? For I too have heard many things about the earth, not however those things which have obtained your belief: I would therefore gladly hear them."

"Indeed, Simmias, the art of Glaucus does not seem to me to be required to relate what these things are; that they are true however, appears to me more than the art of Glaucus can prove, and besides, I should probably not be able to do it, and even if I did know

how, what remains to me of life, Simmias, seems insufficient for the length of the subject. However, the form of the earth, such as I am persuaded it is, and the different places in it, nothing hinders me from telling."

"But that will be enough," said Simmias.

"I am persuaded, then," said he, "in the first place, that, if the earth is in the middle of the heavens, and is of a spherical form, it has no need of air, nor of any 109
other similar force, to prevent it from falling, but that the similarity of the heavens to themselves on every side, and the equilibrium of the earth itself, are sufficient to support it; for a thing in a state of equilibrium when placed in the middle of something that presses it equally on all sides cannot incline more or less on any side, but being equally affected all around remains unmoved. In the first place then," he said, "I am persuaded of this."

"And very properly so," said Simmias.

"Yet further," said he, "that it is very large, and that we who inhabit some small portion of it, from the river Phasis to the pillars of Hercules, dwell about the sea, like ants or frogs about a marsh, and that many others elsewhere dwell in many similar places, for that there are every where about the earth many hollows of various forms and sizes into which there is a confluence of water, mist, and air; but that the earth itself, being pure, is situated in the pure heavens, in which are the stars, and which most persons who are accustomed to speak about such things call ether; of which these things are the sediment and are continually flowing into the hollow parts of the earth. That we are ignorant, then, that we are dwelling in its hollows, and imagine that we inhabit the upper parts of the earth, just as if any one dwelling in the bottom of the sea, should think that he dwelt on the sea, and, beholding the sun and the other stars through the water, should imagine that the sea was the heavens, but through sloth and weakness should never have reached the surface of the sea, nor, having emerged and risen up from the sea to this region, have seen how much more pure and more beautiful it is than the place where he is, nor has heard of it from

any one else who has seen it. This then is the very condition in which we are; for, dwelling in some hollow of the earth, we think that we dwell on the surface of it, and call the air heaven, as if the stars moved through this, being heaven itself. But this is because by reason of our weakness and sloth, we are unable to reach to the summit of the air. Since, if any one could arrive at its summit, or, becoming winged, could fly up thither, or emerging from hence, he would see,—just as with us, fishes emerging from the sea, behold what is here,—so any one would behold the things there, and if his nature were able to endure the contemplation, he would know that that is the true heaven, and
110 the true light, and the true earth. For this earth and these stones, and the whole region here, are decayed and corroded, as things in the sea by the saltness; for nothing of any value grows in the sea, nor, in a word, does it contain any thing perfect, but there are caverns and sand, and mud in abundance, and filth, in whatever parts of the sea there is earth, nor are they at all worthy to be compared with the beautiful things with us. But on the other hand, those things in the upper regions of the earth would appear far more to excel the things with us. For, if we may tell a beautiful fable, it is well worth hearing, Simmias, what kind the things are on the earth beneath the heavens."

"Indeed, Socrates," said Simmias, "we should be very glad to hear that fable."

"First of all then, my friend," he continued, "this earth, if any one should survey it from above, is said to have the appearance of balls covered with twelve different pieces of leather, variegated and distinguished with colours, of which the colours found here, and which painters use, are as it were copies. But there the whole earth is composed of such, and far more brilliant and pure than these; for one part of it is purple, and of wonderful beauty, part of a golden colour, and part of white, more white than chalk or snow, and in like manner composed of other colours, and those more in number and more beautiful than any we have ever beheld. And those very hollow parts of the earth, though

filled with water and air, exhibit a certain species of colour, shining among the variety of other colours, so that one continually variegated aspect presents itself to the view. In this earth, being such, all things that grow, grow in a manner proportioned to its nature, trees, flowers, and fruits; and again, in like manner, its mountains and stones possess, in the same proportion, smoothness and transparency, and more beautiful colours; of which the well-known stones here that are so highly prized are but fragments, such as sardinstones, jaspers, and emeralds, and all of that kind. But there, there is nothing subsists that is not of this character, and even more beautiful than these. But the reason of this is, because the stones there are pure, and not eaten up and decayed, like those here, by rottenness and saltness, which flow down hither together, and which produce deformity and disease in the stones and the earth, and in other things, even animals and plants. But that earth is adorned with all these, and moreover with gold and silver, and other things of the kind: for 111
they are naturally conspicuous, being numerous and large, and in all parts of the earth; so that to behold it is a sight for the blessed. There are also many other animals and men upon it, some dwelling in mid-earth, others about the air, as we do about the sea, and others in islands which the air flows round, and which are near the continent: and in one word, what water and the sea are to us, for our necessities, the air is to them; and what air is to us, that ether is to them. But their seasons are of such a temperament that they are free from disease, and live for a much longer time than those here, and surpass us in sight, hearing, and smelling, and every thing of this kind, as much as air excels water, and ether air, in purity. Moreover, they have abodes and temples of the gods, in which gods really dwell, and voices and oracles, and sensible visions of the gods, and such-like intercourse with them; the sun too, and moon, and stars, are seen by them such as they really are, and their felicity in other respects is correspondent with these things.

"And such indeed is the nature of the whole earth,

and the parts about the earth; but there are many places all round it throughout its cavities, some deeper and more open than that in which we dwell: but others that are deeper, have a less chasm than our region, and others are shallower in depth than it is here and broader. But all these are in many places perforated one into another under the earth, some with narrower and some with wider channels, and have passages through, by which a great quantity of water flows from one into another, as into basins, and there are immense bulks of ever-flowing rivers under the earth, both of hot and cold water, and a great quantity of fire, and mighty rivers of fire, and many of liquid mire, some purer, and some more miry, as in Sicily there are rivers of mud that flow before the lava, and the lava itself, and from these the several places are filled, according as the overflow from time to time happens to come to each of them. But all these move up and down as it were by a certain oscillation existing in the earth. And this oscillation proceeds from such natural cause as
112 this: one of the chasms of the earth is exceedingly large, and perforated through the entire earth, and is that which Homer speaks of, 'very far off, where is the most profound abyss beneath the earth,' which elsewhere both he and many other poets have called Tartarus. For into this chasm all rivers flow together, and from it flow out again: but they severally derive their character from the earth through which they flow. And the reason why all streams flow out from thence, and flow into it, is because this liquid has neither bottom nor base. Therefore it oscillates and fluctuates up and down, and the air and the wind around it do the same; for they accompany it both when it rushes to those parts of the earth, and when to these. And as in respiration the flowing breath is continually breathed out and drawn in, so there the wind oscillating with the liquid, causes certain vehement and irresistible winds both as it enters and goes out. When, therefore, the water rushing in descends to the place which we call the lower region, it flows through the earth into the streams there and fills them, just as men pump up water. But when

again it leaves those regions and rushes hither, it again fills the rivers here, and these, when filled, flow through channels and through the earth, and having severally reached the several places to which they are journeying, they make seas, lakes, rivers, and fountains. Then sinking again from thence beneath the earth, some of them having gone round longer and more numerous places, and others round fewer and shorter, they again discharge themselves into Tartarus, some much lower than they were drawn up, others only a little so, but all of them flow in again beneath the point at which they flowed out. And some issue out directly opposite the place by which they flow in, others on the same side: there are also some which having gone round altogether in a circle, folding themselves once or several times round the earth, like serpents, when they had descended as low as possible, discharge themselves again: and it is possible for them to descend on either side as far as the middle, but not beyond; for in each direction there is an acclivity to the streams both ways.

"Now there are many other large and various streams, and among this great number there are four certain streams, of which the largest, and that which flows most outwardly round the earth, is called Ocean, but directly opposite this, and flowing in a contrary direction, is Acheron, which flows through other desert places, and moreover passing under the earth, reaches 113
the Acherusian lake, where the souls of most who die arrive, and having remained there for certain destined periods, some longer and some shorter, are again sent forth into the generations of animals. A third river issues midway between these, and near its source falls into a vast region, burning with abundance of fire, and forms a lake larger than our sea, boiling with water and mud; from hence it proceeds in a circle, turbulent and muddy, and folding itself round it reaches both other places and the extremity of the Acherusian lake, but does not mingle with its water; but folding itself oftentimes beneath the earth, it discharges itself into the lower parts of Tartarus. And this is the river which they call Pyriphlegethon, whose burning streams

emit dissevered fragments in whatever part of the earth they happen to be. Opposite to this again the fourth river first falls into a place dreadful and savage, as it is said, having its whole colour like cyanus: this they call Stygian, and the lake, which the river forms by its discharge, Styx. This river having fallen in here, and received awful power in the water, sinking beneath the earth, proceeds, folding itself round, in an opposite course to Pyriphlegethon, and meets it in the Acherusian lake from a contrary direction. Neither does the water of this river mingle with any other, but it too, having gone round in a circle, discharges itself into Tartarus, opposite to Pyriphlegethon. Its name, as the poets say, is Cocytus.

"These things being thus constituted, when the dead arrive at the place to which their demon leads them severally, first of all they are judged, as well those who have lived well and piously, as those who have not. And those who appear to have passed a middle kind of life, proceeding to Acheron, and embarking in the vessels they have, on these arrive at the lake, and there dwell, and when they are purified, and have suffered punishment for the iniquities they may have committed, they are set free, and each receives the reward of his good deeds, according to his deserts: but those who appear to be incurable, through the magnitude of their offences, either from having committed many and great sacrileges, or many unjust and lawless murders, or other similar crimes, these a suitable destiny hurls into Tartarus, whence they never come forth. But those who appear to have been guilty of curable, yet great offences, such as those who through anger have com-
114 mitted any violence against father or mother, and have lived the remainder of their life in a state of penitence, or they who have become homicides in a similar manner, these must of necessity fall into Tartarus, but after they have fallen, and have been there for a year, the wave casts them forth, the homicides into Cocytus, but the parricides and matricides into Pyriphlegethon: but when, being borne along, they arrive at the Acherusian lake, there they cry out to and invoke, some those whom

they slew, others those whom they injured, and invoking them, they entreat and implore them to suffer them to go out into the lake, and to receive them, and if they persuade them, they go out, and are freed from their sufferings, but if not, they are borne back to Tartarus, and thence again to the rivers, and they do not cease from suffering this until they have persuaded those whom they have injured, for this sentence was imposed on them by the judges. But those who are found to have lived an eminently holy life, these are they, who, being freed and set at large from these regions in the earth, as from a prison, arrive at the pure abode above, and dwell on the upper parts of the earth. And among these, they who have sufficiently purified themselves by philosophy shall live without bodies, throughout all future time, and shall arrive at habitations yet more beautiful than these, which it is neither easy to describe, nor at present is there sufficient time for the purpose.

"But for the sake of these things which we have described, we should use every endeavour, Simmias, so as to acquire virtue and wisdom in this life; for the reward is noble, and the hope great.

"To affirm positively, indeed, that these things are exactly as I have described them, does not become a man of sense; that however either this, or something of the kind, takes place with respect to our souls and their habitations—since our soul is certainly immortal—this appears to me most fitting to be believed, and worthy the hazard for one who trusts in its reality; for the hazard is noble, and it is right to allure ourselves with such things, as with enchantments; for which reason I have prolonged my story to such a length. On account of these things, then, a man ought to be confident about his soul, who during this life has disregarded all the pleasures and ornaments of the body as foreign from his nature, and who, having thought that they do more harm than good, has zealously applied himself to the acquirement of knowledge, and who having adorned his soul not with a foreign but its own proper ornament, temperance, justice, fortitude, free- 115
dom, and truth, thus waits for his passage to Hades,

as one who is ready to depart whenever destiny shall summon him. You then," he continued, "Simmias and Cebes, and the rest, will each of you depart at some future time; but now destiny summons me, as a tragic writer would say, and it is nearly time for me to betake myself to the bath; for it appears to me to be better to drink the poison after I have bathed myself, and not to trouble the women with washing my dead body."

When he had thus spoken, Crito said, "So be it, Socrates, but what commands have you to give to these or to me, either respecting your children, or any other matter, in attending to which we can most oblige you?"

"What I always say, Crito," he replied, "nothing new; that by taking care of yourselves you will oblige both me and mine, and yourselves, whatever you do, though you should not now promise it; but if you neglect yourselves, and will not live as it were in the footsteps of what has been now and formerly said, even though you should promise much at present, and that earnestly, you will do no good at all."

"We will endeavour then so to do," he said; "but how shall we bury you?"

"Just as you please," he said, "if only you can catch me, and I do not escape from you." And at the same time smiling gently, and looking round on us, he said; "I cannot persuade Crito, my friends, that I am that Socrates who is now conversing with you, and who methodizes each part of the discourse; but he thinks that I am he whom he will shortly behold dead, and asks how he should bury me. But that which I some time since argued at length, that when I have drunk the poison I shall no longer remain with you, but shall depart to some happy state of the blessed, this I seem to have urged to him in vain, though I meant at the same time to console both you and myself. Be ye then my sureties to Crito," he said, "in an obligation contrary to that which he made to the judges; for he undertook that I should remain; but do you be sureties that, when I die, I shall not remain, but shall depart, that Crito may more easily bear it, and when he sees my body either burnt or buried, may not be afflicted for

me, as if I suffered some dreadful thing, nor say at my interment that Socrates is laid out, or is carried out, or is buried. For be well assured," he said, "most excellent Crito, that to speak improperly is not only culpable as to the thing itself, but likewise occasions some injury to our souls. You must have a good courage then, and say that you bury my body, and bury it in such a manner 116
as is pleasing to you, and as you think is most agreeable to our laws."

When he had said thus he rose, and went into a chamber to bathe, and Crito followed him, but he directed us to wait for him. We waited, therefore, conversing among ourselves about what had been said, and considering it again, and sometimes speaking about our calamity, how severe it would be to us, sincerely thinking that, like those who are deprived of a father, we should pass the rest of our life as orphans. When he had bathed, and his children were brought to him, for he had two little sons and one grown up, and the women belonging to his family were come, having conversed with them in the presence of Crito, and given them such injunctions as he wished, he directed the women and children to go away, and then returned to us. And it was now near sun-set; for he spent a considerable time within. But when he came from bathing he sat down, and did not speak much afterwards; then the officer of the Eleven came in, and standing near him, said, "Socrates, I shall not have to find that fault with you that I do with others, that they are angry with me, and curse me, when, by order of the archons, I bid them drink the poison. But you, on all other occasions during the time you have been here, I have found to be the most noble, meek, and excellent man of all that ever came into this place: and, therefore, I am now well convinced that you will not be angry with me, for you know who are to blame, but with them. Now, then, for you know what I came to announce to you, farewell, and endeavour to bear what is inevitable as easily as possible." And at the same time, bursting into tears, he turned away and withdrew.

And Socrates, looking after him, said, "And thou.

too, farewell, we will do as you direct." At the same time turning to us, he said, "How courteous the man is; during the whole time I have been here he has visited me, and conversed with me sometimes, and proved the worthiest of men; and now how generously he weeps for me. But come, Crito, let us obey him, and let some one bring the poison, if it is ready pounded, but if not, let the man pound it."

Then Crito said, "But I think, Socrates, that the sun is still on the mountains, and has not yet set. Besides, I know that others have drunk the poison very late, after it had been announced to them, and have supped and drunk freely, and some even have enjoyed the objects of their love. Do not hasten then, for there is yet time."

Upon this Socrates replied, "These men whom you mention, Crito, do these things with good reason, for they think they shall gain by so doing, and I too with good reason shall not do so; for I think I shall gain nothing by drinking a little later, except to become
117 ridiculous to myself, in being so fond of life, and sparing of it when none any longer remains. Go then," he said, "obey, and do not resist."

Crito having heard this, nodded to the boy that stood near. And the boy having gone out, and staid for some time, came, bringing with him the man that was to administer the poison, who brought it ready pounded in a cup. And Socrates, on seeing the man, said, "Well, my good friend, as you are skilled in these matters, what must I do?"

"Nothing else," he replied, "than when you have drunk it walk about, until there is a heaviness in your legs, then lie down; thus it will do its purpose." And at the same time he held out the cup to Socrates. And he having received it very cheerfully, Echecrates, neither trembling, nor changing at all in colour or countenance, but, as he was wont, looking steadfastly at the man, said, "What say you of this potion, with respect to making a libation to any one, is it lawful or not?"

"We only pound so much, Socrates," he said, "as we think sufficient to drink."

"I understand you," he said, "but it is certainly both lawful and right to pray to the gods, that my departure hence thither may be happy; which therefore I pray, and so may it be." And as he said this he drank it off readily and calmly. Thus far, most of us were with difficulty able to restrain ourselves from weeping, but when we saw him drinking, and having finished the draught, we could do so no longer; but in spite of myself the tears came in full torrent, so that, covering my face, I wept for myself, for I did not weep for him, but for my own fortune, in being deprived of such a friend. But Crito, even before me, when he could not restrain his tears, had risen up. But Apollodorus even before this had not ceased weeping, and then bursting into an agony of grief, weeping and lamenting, he pierced the heart of every one present, except Socrates himself. But he said, "What are you doing, my admirable friends? I indeed, for this reason chiefly, sent away the women, that they might not commit any folly of this kind. For I have heard that it is right to die with good omens. Be quiet, therefore, and bear up."

When we heard this we were ashamed, and restrained our tears. But he, having walked about, when he said that his legs were growing heavy, laid down on his back; for the man so directed him. And at the same time he who gave him the poison, taking hold of him, after a short interval examined his feet and legs; and then having pressed his foot hard, he asked if he felt it: 118
he said that he did not. And after this he pressed his thighs; and thus going higher, he showed us that he was growing cold and stiff. Then Socrates touched himself, and said, that when the poison reached his heart he should then depart. But now the parts around the lower belly were almost cold; when uncovering himself, for he had been covered over, he said, and they were his last words, "Crito, we owe a cock to Æsculapius; pay it, therefore, and do not neglect it."

"It shall be done," said Crito, "but consider whether you have any thing else to say."

To this question he gave no reply; but shortly after

God of medicine

he gave a convulsive movement, and the man covered him, and his eyes were fixed; and Crito, perceiving it, closed his mouth and eyes.

This, Echecrates, was the end of our friend, a man, as we may say, the best of all of his time that we have known, and moreover, the most wise and just.

PHÆDRUS

Socrates—Phædrus

St. III. p. 227

Socrates. WHENCE come you, friend Phædrus, and whither are you bound?

Phæd. I come from Lysias, the son of Cephalus; and I am going for a walk outside the walls, as I have been sitting with him a long time, in fact ever since daybreak. And it is by the advice, Socrates, of our common friend Acumenus, that I take my walks in the open roads; for he tells me they are more refreshing than the covered promenades.

Socrates. And he's right there, my good friend. So Lysias, it appears, was in the city.

Phæd. Yes, staying with Epicrates at the Morychian yonder, close by the Olympian.

Socrates. Well, how did you pass your time there? though I can hardly doubt that Lysias regaled you with his speeches.

Phæd. You shall hear, if you are not too much engaged to join me in my walk.

Socrates. Engaged, indeed? don't you believe that in the words of Pindar I would count it "a matter far above all engagement" to hear what passed between you and Lysias?

Phæd. Come on then.

Socrates. If you will begin your tale.

Phæd. I will; and I can assure you, Socrates, you will find it very much in your way. For the speech which engaged our attention was in a certain fashion of an amatory character; that is to say, Lysias introduced one of our beautiful boys as being courted, though not by a lover; in fact, this is the very point on which he has displayed his ingenuity, as he maintains that favour ought to be shown to one who is not in love, rather than to one who is.

Socrates. What a generous man! I wish he would maintain that poverty has a better claim than wealth, and age than youth; and in short, that the preference ought to be given to all the other properties that belong to myself in common with the bulk of mankind. In that case his speeches would be really delightful, and of public utility. But whether he does so or not, I have conceived such a desire to hear what he says, that even if you extend your walk to Megara, and, as Herodicus prescribes, go close up to the wall and then turn back again, you will not shake me off, I can promise you.

Phæd. What are you talking about, my good friend
228 Socrates? It took Lysias, the cleverest writer of the day, a long while to compose this speech at his leisure; and do you imagine that a novice like myself could repeat it from memory without doing injustice to the author? No, that I am very sure I could not; and yet I would sooner be able to do so than come into the possession of a large sum of money.

Socrates. My good friend Phædrus, if I do not know Phædrus, I do not know myself any longer. But neither the one nor the other is the case; I do know Phædrus; I know full well that on hearing Lysias read the speech, he was not content with hearing it once only, but kept urging him to repeat it again and again; and Lysias was quite as eager to comply. Phædrus however was not satisfied even with this, but at last took the book from the other's hands, and looked over again the parts he especially fancied. And being wearied with sitting all the morning thus engaged, he set out for a walk, though not, I fully believe, till he had learnt the entire speech by heart, unless it was a very long one. And he was going outside the walls to con it over by himself. But on his way he met with a man who is afflicted with a weakness for listening to speeches, and when he saw him he was charmed (oh so charmed) at the sight, for says he, "I shall now have a friend to share in my raptures." So he requested his friend to join him in his walk. When, however, this lover of speeches asked him to commence, he began to be coy, as though disinclined, albeit determined I am

sure, if he could get no willing hearer, to speak out at last even to unwilling ears. Do you therefore, Phædrus, request him to do at once what at all events he is sure to do presently.

Phæd. My wisest plan, there seems little doubt, is to repeat the speech as well as I am able; for I believe you have made up your mind on no account to let me go, till I have given it you in some way or other.

Socrates. You have defined my intentions to a nicety.

Phæd. Well then, I'll do my best, though really, Socrates, I can assure you that I have not learnt the words by heart; but if you are content with a general view of the points of difference, as Lysias laid them down, between the claims of the impassioned and unimpassioned suitor, I am ready to go through them in order under their several heads, beginning where he began.

Socrates. Thank you, my obliging friend; not till you have shown me though, what it is you have got there in your left hand beneath your cloak, as I have a shrewd suspicion that it is the speech itself. If so, I must beg you to understand that, fond as I am of you, I have yet no intention at all of lending myself for you to practise upon, while Lysias is also present. So let us see what you have got.

Phæd. Enough, Socrates, I confess; you have dashed down the hope I entertained of practising my memory on you. But where would you like us to sit down and read the speech?

Socrates. Let us turn aside here, and go down by the Ilissus, and then wherever we find a spot to our taste 229
we will sit down and rest.

Phæd. How lucky that I happened to come out without my shoes—and you, Socrates, we know never wear them. Our easiest plan then is to walk down the streamlet with our feet in the water, and we shall find it by no means disagreeable, considering the season of the year, and the hour of the day.

Socrates. Come on then, and keep at the same time a look out for a seat.

Phæd. Do you see that towering plane-tree yonder?

Socrates. Of course I do.

Phæd. Well, there we shall find shade and a gentle breeze, and grass enough for a seat, or if we prefer it, for a bed.

Socrates. Let us walk towards it.

Phæd. Tell me, Socrates, was it not from somewhere hereabouts on the Ilissus that Boreas is said to have carried off Orithyia?

Socrates. So the tale goes.

Phæd. Must it not have been from this very spot? So beautiful is the water here, so clear and transparent, and just such as one can fancy maidens loving to play by.

Socrates. No, not here, but about a quarter of a mile lower down, just where we cross over to the temple of the Huntress. And if I am not mistaken, there is an altar on the spot to Boreas.

Phæd. I have never noticed it. But tell me honestly, Socrates, do you believe this tale of mythology to be true?

Socrates. Why, I should do nothing strangely out of the way if I *were* to refuse to it credit, as the learned do; and go on in their rationalizing method to say that as the girl was playing with Pharmacæa she was blown over the adjoining cliffs by a blast of the wind Boreas; and that having met with her death in this manner, she was fabled to have been carried off by the god Boreas—either from this place, or if you like from Mars's hill, which, according to another account, was the scene of her adventure. But for my part, Phædrus, though I consider such explanations sufficiently pretty, yet I esteem them the peculiar province of a very subtle, painstaking, and by no means particularly enviable person; if for no other reason than that he will be called upon, as soon as he has finished this subject, to set us right as to the form of the Hippocentaurs, and again as to that of the Chimæra, and then he will have pouring in upon him a like crowd of Gorgons and Pegasuses, and such a wondrous host of portentous and impossible creations, that if he were to disbelieve them all, and, with a kind of vulgar acuteness, apply to each succes-

sively the test of probability, he would require no small amount of time and labour for his task. But I have no leisure for such studies—and the reason, my friend, is this : I cannot as yet obey the Delphic inscription, which bids me know myself ; and it seems to me ridiculous for one who is still destitute of this knowledge to busy himself with matters which in no wise concern him. I therefore leave these subjects alone, and acquiescing in 230
the received opinion regarding them, I devote myself, as I just now said, to the study, not of fables, but of my own self, that I may see whether I am really a more complicated and a more furious monster than Typhon, or a creature of a gentler and a simpler sort, the born heir of a divine and tranquil nature. But by the by, Phædrus, was not this the tree to which you were leading me?

Phæd. The very one.

Socrates. Well, really, this *is* a glorious resting-place. For the plane-tree I find is thick and spreading, as well as tall, and the size and shadiness of the agnus castus here is very beautiful, and being at the height of its flower, it must render our retreat most fragrant. How delicious too is this spring trickling under the plane-tree, and how cold its water, to judge by the foot ! It would seem from these images and votive offerings that the place is sacred to some nymphs and river-god. Again, how lovely and enjoyable above measure is the airiness of the spot ! summer-like and clear there rings an answer to the choir of the cicalas. But the most charming thing of all is this abundant grass, with its gentle slope just made for the head to fall back on luxuriously. Really, Phædrus, you make a most admirable guide.

Phæd. And you, Socrates, are a most unaccountable being. In fact, as you say, you are just like a stranger who is being shown the beauties of the place, and not like a native of the country; the consequence this of your never leaving the city either to cross the frontier, or even, I do believe, for so much as a walk outside the walls.

Socrates. You must bear with me, dear Phædrus—I

am so fond of learning. Now trees, you know, and fields cannot teach me anything, but men in the city can. You, however, would appear to have discovered the charm that can entice me out. For as shepherds draw after them their hungry flocks by shaking branches or grain up and down before their eyes, so could you, I believe, make me follow you, not only all round Attica, but also wherever else you might wish to lead, by simply holding out to me a written speech as a bait. And since we have reached this spot on the present occasion, I cannot do better than lay me down to listen, and do you choose that posture which you think most convenient for reading in, and begin the speech.

Phæd. Attend then:

"With the state of my affairs you are acquainted, and how I expect advantage to us both from this arrange-
231 ment you have heard. Now I claim not to be disappointed in my suit on the ground of my not belonging to the number of your lovers. For they repent of the benefits they have conferred the moment that their desire ceases; but for us, who never love, there is no particular time at which we may be expected to change our minds. For it is not under the influence of a resistless passion, but of our own free choice that we do you a kindness, consulting what our means will allow, and what is best for our interests to bestow. Again, lovers take into consideration the derangement of their private affairs which their love has occasioned, and the services they have rendered their favourites; and adding all the trouble they have taken to the reckoning, they conceive that by all this they have long ago paid the return which is due to the object of their affection. We, on the other hand, are not able to pretend that we have neglected our fortunes for love; we cannot take into account the labours we have endured, nor plead the domestic quarrels which have resulted from our devotion; so that, as our suit is divested of all such evils as these, we have nothing left us but cheerfully to do whatever we may think we shall please you by performing. Again, if it be a fair reason for setting store on a lover, that he professes greater attachment for his favourite than for

any one else, and is ready both by word and deed to incur the enmity of all the world beside, if he can but gratify the object of his passion, it is easy to perceive that if his profession be a true one, all of whom he may hereafter become enamoured, will be held of greater account than his earlier love, and it is clear that, if the former wish it, he will not hesitate to do even harm to the latter. And how can you think it reasonable to lavish so costly a treasure on one suffering under a fatal infliction, which no man acquainted with its nature would even attempt to avert; when even the sufferer himself owns that his mind is diseased, and that he knows his own folly, but cannot restrain it? And when this man is restored to his senses, how can he possibly judge that to be well done about which he was so desirous when in such a state of mind? And further, if you were to select the best from among your lovers, your choice would be made from a small number; but if from the rest of the world you were to select the man who is most suitable to yourself, it would be made from a large number; so that there is far more reason to expect that in the larger number exists the one who is deserving of your attachment. If, moreover, you stand in awe of public opinion, and dread its reproaches on the affair being discovered, it is but natural to suppose that lovers, from an idea that others will deem 232
them as happy as they esteem themselves, will be so elated as to talk of their intimacy, and with ostentatious vanity give all men to know that their labour has not been spent in vain; but that we on the other hand, who by never loving, never lose the dominion over ourselves, should prefer what is truly advantageous to any celebrity that is to be had in the world. Again, men cannot help hearing and seeing how lovers run after their favourites, and that too with elaborate parade; so that the mere fact of their being seen together is sufficient to give rise to suspicion; whereas no one would think of suspecting us for holding conversation with you, as they know that people cannot help talking with some one or other, either from friendship or for some other pleasure. And further, if you have ever conceived an alarm from

remembering how difficult it is for a friendship to last, and from the reflection, that in ordinary cases when a quarrel has taken place, the misfortune is felt equally on both sides, but that in love, as it is you who have lavished what you prize most highly, so it is you who will suffer most deeply by a rupture, let me remind you that here again it is those who are in love that you have most reason to look upon with terror. For many are the causes that irritate lovers, and they think that everything is done to hurt and annoy them. For which reason also they are anxious to deter you from associating with the world, fearing those who are possessed of substance, lest they outbid them with money, and those who are educated, lest they outshine them in ability; and so whatever may be the advantage a man possesses, they look with suspicion on his influence in that particular. If then they succeed in persuading you to abstain from society, they leave you at last without a friend in the world; but if, with an eye to your own interests, you adopt a different and wiser course, a quarrel will be the inevitable result. By us, on the other hand, who are not in love, but owe to our merit the accomplishment of our desires, no jealousy would be entertained for those who cultivate your acquaintance, but rather dislike for such as avoid it; as we should consider ourselves slighted by the neglect of the latter, but benefited by the intimacy of the former. And such being our feelings, surely you have reason to expect that friendship rather than hatred will result from our intercourse. And further, lovers frequently conceive a desire for the person before they have discovered the character or become acquainted with the other properties of their favourites, so that it is impossible for you to tell whether their disposition for friendship will outlast the continu-
233 ance of their desire. But when passion has never existed, when your favours have been obtained by those who were your friends before, it is not likely that this friendship will be lessened by what has been the source of so much delight—rather will the memory of the past be an earnest of future attachment. And further, you must not forget the superior opportunities of improve-

ment which will be afforded you by favouring my suit. Lovers are so neglectful of your best interests, that they praise everything you say and do, partly for fear of giving offence, and partly because their own judgment is debased by their passion. For such are the caprices of love; if its victim be unsuccessful, it makes trifles which trouble no one else seem distressing to him; if successful, it exacts from him admiration for what contains no cause of satisfaction. So that I consider pity to be far more suitable than congratulation for the objects of such an attachment. I on the other hand, if you yield to my wishes, will associate with you on the following terms. Not consulting our present gratification so much as our future advantage; not enslaved by passion, but master of myself; not ready to contract a violent animosity on slight provocation, but slow to conceive a moderate displeasure for serious offences, I will freely pardon all involuntary faults, while such as are intentional I will endeavour to correct. For such conduct is a sure sign of a friendship that will long endure. But if the thought, as is not unlikely, has suggested itself to you, that it is impossible for attachment to be strong if unaccompanied by passion, you ought to bear in mind, that in that case we should care but little either for our sons or for our fathers and mothers, nor should we ever possess faithful friends on any other footing than an amatory connection. Again. if it is proper to bestow favours most on those who need them most, it follows that from the world in general you ought to select, not the best, but the neediest as the objects of your charity—for the greater the misery they are rescued from, the greater is the debt of gratitude they will owe you. Nay further, when you give an entertainment, you will be expected to ask not friends to your board, but those who beg an invitation and require a meal; for they will be charmed with your kindness, and will follow in your train and throng your doors, and express themselves highly delighted and deeply grateful, and invoke countless blessings on your head. It may be though that this is not the true ground of selection; it may be that you ought to bestow your

favours, not on those who need them most, but on those who are best able to repay them; not on lovers merely, but on those who are worthy of the favour in
234 question; not on men who will enjoy the flower of your youth, but on those who in your more advanced years will share with you *their* fortunes; not on such as when they have achieved their purpose will parade their success to the world, but on such as from feelings of delicacy will never open their mouths on the subject; not on suitors who sue you with a short-lived enthusiasm, but on friends who will continue friends all your life long; not on men, who when they are released from their passion, will seek some pretext for a quarrel, but on those who when your bloom is faded, will then display their own true excellence. Remember now, I pray you, all I have said; and also bear in mind that lovers are taken to task by their friends on the score that their course of life is a bad one; whereas never have those who do not love been reproached by any of their relatives with neglecting on that account their private affairs. You may perhaps ask me whether I recommend you to bestow your favours on all who do not love you. But neither, I imagine, would a lover bid you entertain such sentiments towards all your lovers alike. No, if you view the matter reasonably, you cannot consider such conduct deserving of equal gratitude, nor, however you might wish it, would you be equally able to preserve the affair secret from the world. And harm, you must remember, ought to accrue to neither from the transaction; advantage should rather result to both.

"My suit has now been urged with arguments which for my part I deem convincing—should you see in them any defect or omission, they are open to any questions you may choose to ask."

Well, Socrates, what do you think of the speech? Is it not wonderfully fine, especially in point of language?

Socrates. Nay, divinely, my good friend; it quite threw me into an ecstasy. And this sensation I owe to you, Phædrus; for all the time you were reading, I kept my eye on your face, and saw it glow with rapture under the influence of the speech. And esteeming you a better

judge in such matters than myself, I thought I could not do better than follow your example, and so I have shared with you in all your transports, my god-inspired friend.

Phæd. Nay, Socrates, always so bent on jesting?

Socrates. Jesting! don't you believe I am in earnest?

Phæd. Oh, no more of this, Socrates; but tell me honestly as you love me, do you believe that any man in Greece could write more ably and fully on the same subject?

Socrates. How do you mean, Phædrus? Are we required to praise the speech for the fitness of its subject-matter, or merely on the ground that every word in it is clear, and rounded and polished off with a nice precision? If on the former ground as well, it is only to please you that I can comply, since for my part my incapacity is such, that I observed no excellence of the kind. For I was merely directing my attention to its 235
rhetorical merit, though this I did not imagine even Lysias himself would consider sufficient. In fact, I thought, Phædrus—please correct me if I am wrong—that he repeated the same things two or three times over, as though he found it no such easy matter to say much on one subject. Perhaps, though, it was that he did not mind this sort of thing; nay, I could even fancy that he was showing off with a young man's display the power he possessed of expressing his ideas in two different ways, and in both with the finest possible language.

Phæd. You are quite wrong, Socrates; the very merit which you deny is to be found in the speech in even an eminent degree. Of all appropriate topics which the subject contained, it has not omitted a single one; so that I am sure, that after what he has said, no one could ever support the same position at greater length, or with arguments of greater value.

Socrates. On this point, Phædrus, it will be no longer in my power to agree with you. For wise men and women of old time, who have written and spoken on the subject, will rise up and bear witness against me, if out of complaisance to you I make this concession.

Phæd. Whom do you mean? where have you ever heard the subject better treated?

Socrates. I cannot say just at the moment, though I am sure I have heard it somewhere, either perhaps by the fair Sappho, or the sage Anacreon, or may be by some prose writer or other. What leads me, you will ask, to this conclusion? The fact is, my worthy Phædrus, that my breast, I know not how, is full of matter, and I feel that I could be delivered of a speech different from, and in no wise inferior to this. Now that I have invented none of it myself, I am confident, as I am no stranger to my own stupidity. It remains then, I think, that like a pitcher I have been filled, through my ears, from some foreign source; but here again so stupid am I, that I have quite forgotten both how and where I gained my information.

Phæd. Never mind, Socrates, you have told me most excellent tidings; don't trouble yourself about telling me how or from whom you heard it, but just do the very thing that you say. Undertake to produce a speech of equal length and merit with that which I have got written here, without availing yourself of any of its arguments, and for my part I promise you, after the fashion of the nine archons,* that I will dedicate to the god at Delphi a golden statue as large as life, not only of myself, but also of you.

Socrates. You are very kind, Phædrus, and quite deserve the statue of gold, if you understand me to mean that Lysias missed his mark altogether, and that it is possible to produce a speech which shall contain nothing that he said. No, I do not think this could be done with even the most worthless writer. Since, to take our present subject, do you suppose that any man who was maintaining the superior claims of the unimpassioned to those of the impassioned suitor, would be able to proceed with his arguments if he were to omit lauding the sanity of the one, and blaming the insanity
236 of the other? these being topics which are necessarily inherent in the proposition. No, such arguments ought, I think, to be allowed and conceded to the author; and in all such it is not the invention, but the arrangement

highest Athenian officials

that should be admired; whereas in those which, instead of being impossible to miss are difficult to find, the invention as well as the arrangement may claim our approval.

Phæd. I admit the distinction, as it appears to me to be fairly stated. And what is more, I will act up to it. I will allow you to assume that a man in love is in a more diseased condition than one who is not in love, and if, when this point is put out of the question on both sides, you surpass Lysias in the number and value of your arguments, you may expect to figure in massive gold at Olympia by the side of the offering of the Cypselidæ.

Socrates. You have taken it quite to heart, Phædrus, that in teasing you I have laid hold upon your favourite; and I see you expect that I shall really attempt, in emulation of his skill, to produce something still more skilfully wrought.

Phæd. For that matter, my friend, you have given me quite as good a hold on you. For speak you must as well as you are able; there is no help for it. But do take care that we are not compelled to have recourse to the vulgar stage-trick of retorting upon each other; pray don't force me to say as you did just now: "My good Socrates, if you don't know Socrates, I don't know Phædrus any longer;" and again, "Socrates is dying to speak, but affects to be coy." No, make up your mind that we will not stir from this spot, till you have disclosed what you said your heart contained. For here we are by ourselves in a retired place, and I am the younger and stronger man of the two. All which things being considered, you had better mind what I say, and determine to speak of your own free will rather than by compulsion.

Socrates. But really, Phædrus, it would be ludicrous in a novice like me to set myself in comparison with an experienced author, and extemporize on a subject which he has discussed.

Phæd. I'll tell you what it is, Socrates; you must let me have no more of this coquetting, as I am pretty sure I have that to say which will compel you to speak.

ypselos: Tyrann von Korinth um 600;

Socrates. Pray don't say it then.

Phæd. Nay, but I will, and here it is. And it shall be in the form of an oath. I swear to you—by whom, by what god shall I swear? Shall it be by this plane-tree? Yes, by this plane I swear, that if you do not produce your speech here before her, I will never again either report or recite to you the speech of any author whatsoever.

Socrates. Ah, wretch, well have you discovered the means of compelling a speech-enamoured man to do your bidding, whatever it be!

Phæd. What makes you hang back, then?

Socrates. I will do so no more, since you, Phædrus, have sworn this oath. For how could I ever have the heart to exclude myself from such a feast?

237 *Phæd.* Begin then.

Socrates. Shall I tell you what I mean to do?

Phæd. About what?

Socrates. I mean to speak with my face covered, that I may hurry through the speech as quickly as possible, and not break down for shame, by looking at you.

Phæd. Well, do but speak, and you may settle everything else as you like.

Socrates. Come now, ye Muses called Ligæan, whether it be to the nature of your song, or to the music-loving race of the Ligyans that ye owe the name, —come help me in the tale which my kind friend here is forcing me to tell, in order that his favourite, who even heretofore seemed to him to be wise, may now seem wiser than ever.

There was once upon a time a boy, say rather a youth, of surpassing beauty. Now this youth had very many lovers; but one of them was a cunning fellow, who though he loved him no less warmly than his rivals, had made the youth believe that he loved him not. And one day as he was urging his suit, he undertook to prove this very point, that the dispassionate suitor had a better claim on his favour than the impassioned lover. And here is his proof.

On every subject, my friend, there is but one mode of beginning for those who would deliberate well. They

must know what the thing is on which they are deliberating, or else of necessity go altogether astray. Most men, however, are blind to the fact that they are ignorant of the essential character of each individual thing. Fancying therefore that they possess this knowledge, they come to no mutual understanding at the outset of their inquiry, and in the sequel they exhibit the natural consequence, an inconsistency with themselves and each other. Let not you and me then fall into the error which we condemn in others, but since the question before us is, whether love or the absence of love is desirable in friendship; let us first establish by mutual consent a definition of love that will explain its nature and its powers, and then, with this to look back upon and refer to, let us proceed to consider whether it is profitable or injurious in its results. Now that love is a kind of desire is clear to every one, and equally clear is it on the other hand, that without being in love we desire beautiful objects. How then are we to mark the lover? We should further observe, that in every one of us there are two ruling and directing principles, whose guidance we follow wherever they may lead, the one being an innate desire of pleasure; the other, an acquired judgment which aspires after excellence. Now these two principles at one time maintain harmony, while at another they are at feud within us, and now one and now the other obtains the mastery. When judgment leads us with sound reason to virtue, 238
and asserts its authority, we assign to that authority the name of temperance; but when desire drags us irrationally to pleasures, and has established its sway within us, that sway is denominated excess. Now excess, you must know, is a thing of many names, as it is of many parts and many forms. And of these forms, that which may happen to have obtained the predominance brands its possessor with its name, and that one neither honourable nor worth possessing. For instance, when desire in regard of eating gets the better of the highest reason and the other desires, it will be termed gluttony, and cause its possessor to be called a glutton. If again it has usurped dominion in the matter of drinking, and

drags the individual affected by it in this direction, I need not say what designation it will acquire. And since in general names akin to these names are applied to desires akin to these desires, it is sufficiently clear what is the proper appellation of the desire which for the time being happens to be dominant. Now my motive for introducing these previous remarks must by this time be pretty well evident; but nothing is so clear that it does not admit of becoming clearer by being spoken. When desire, having rejected reason and overpowered judgment which leads to right, is set in the direction of the pleasure which beauty can inspire, and when again under the influence of its kindred desires it is moved with violent motion towards the beauty of corporeal forms, it acquires a surname from this very violent motion, and is called love. But by the way, my dear Phædrus, do I appear to you, as I do to myself, to have been speaking under some influence divine?

Phæd. There certainly can be no doubt, Socrates, that an unusual kind of fluency has come upon you.

Socrates. Hearken then in silence to my words, for in very truth the place where we are sitting seems holy ground. So that if haply in the course of my oration I become entranced by the spirits of the spot, you must not marvel thereat; for my present utterance falls no longer far short of a dithyrambic strain.

Phæd. Most true; it does not.

Socrates. And for this, Phædrus, *you* are answerable. But listen to the remainder of my speech, for it may be that I shall escape the trance. This, however, will be as Heaven pleases; for ourselves, we must return in our discourse to the beautiful boy.

Come then, my excellent youth. Since the definition of the subject under discussion has been stated and accurately marked, let us now keep this in our view, while we proceed to consider what advantage or injury is likely to result to you from favouring the wishes of an impassioned and unimpassioned suitor respectively. If a man be governed by desire and the slave of pleasure, he must of necessity, I think, endeavour to render his beloved the source of as much pleasure to himself as he

possibly can. Now, to a sick man everything gives 239
pleasure that does not oppose itself to his wishes, but whatever asserts a superiority or even an equality, excites his dislike. A lover, therefore, if he can help it, will not bear his favourite to be either superior to or on a level with himself, but is always striving to lower him and make him his inferior. Now ignorance is inferior to learning, cowardice to courage, incapacity as a speaker to oratorical skill, heaviness of intellect to a ready wit. Such, among many others, are the mental defects which a lover must needs rejoice to find in his loved one if they are naturally inherent, and which, if they result from education, he must endeavour to instil, or else forfeit his immediate gratification. The consequence is, that your lover will regard you with a jealous eye, and by debarring you from many valuable acquaintances, the cultivation of which would be most conducive to your growth in manliness, he will do you serious harm, and the greatest harm of all by excluding you from that which would make you truly wise; I mean the study of Divine Philosophy, from which your lover will be sure to keep you as far as possible asunder, for fear of your there learning to despise him. And not content with this, he will so scheme as to leave you in total ignorance of every subject whatever, so that on every subject you may be compelled to look to him for information, as this is the condition for you to be in that will cause him the keenest delight, but yourself the most ruinous harm. So far then as mental improvement is concerned, you cannot have a less profitable guide and companion than a suitor who is under the influence of love.

Let us now proceed to consider what will be your corporeal habit, and what your course of bodily discipline, if you have for your lord and master a man who cannot help pursuing pleasure in preference to virtue. Such a person will be seen running after a delicate stripling, not hardy in frame nor reared beneath a scorching sun, but fondled under the shade of bending trees; a stranger to manly toil and healthy sweatings, but no stranger to the softness of a woman's life, deck-

ing his person with false colours and ornaments, in lack of nature's graces, and given in short to all such practices as are the natural concomitants of these. What they are, you know so well that I need not dilate on them further; but, summing them up under one general head, I will proceed to another branch of my subject. They are such that the youth whose body is trained in them will not fail in time of battle and all serious emergencies to inspire his enemies with confidence, but his friends and lovers with alarm.

To pass from these obvious reflections, let us in the next place examine what advantage or what injury to your fortune we may expect to find resulting from the companionship and management of a lover. Clear it must be to every one, and to the lover himself most of all, that there is nothing he would pray for so earnestly as for the object of his attachment to be deprived of his dearest, fondest, and holiest treasures. Gladly would he see him bereft of father and mother, of relations and
240 friends, as in them he views only so many censors and obstacles in the way of that commerce with his beloved which he loves most dearly. Moreover, if a youth be possessed of property in gold or other kind of substance, he will not appear so ready a prey, nor so easy of management when caught in the toils. And thus it cannot possibly be but that a lover will grudge his favourite the possession of fortune, and rejoice sincerely in its loss. Nay more, he would fain have him remain as long as possible without wife, or child, or home, in his desire of reaping for the longest time he can the full enjoyment of his own delights.

There are, I am aware, other evils beside this in the world, though few with which some deity has not mingled a temporary gratification. A parasite, for instance, is a shocking and a baneful monster, yet still nature has infused into his blandishments a not unpolished charm. A mistress, moreover, may be condemned as a dangerous evil; and the same objection may be made to a variety of similar creatures and pursuits, which are yet capable of affording, for the passing hour at least, the keenest enjoyment. But a lover,

beside being detrimental to his favourite, is of all distasteful things the most distasteful in daily intercourse. We are told by an ancient saying, that youth is pleased with youth, and age with age: I suppose because a similarity of years leading to a similarity of pleasures, by virtue of resemblance, engenders friendship. But yet the intercourse even of equals is not unattended by satiety. And further, in every transaction every one, it is said, finds compulsion irksome; and this is an evil which, in addition to their want of sympathy, is felt in the highest degree by the favourite in the society of his lover. For an old man is the companion of a young one, never leaving him if he can help it by day or by night, but driven onward by a resistless frenzy, which is all the while ministering to him indeed exquisite pleasure as long as by his sight, his hearing, his touch, his every sense, he is made aware of the presence of the beautiful boy, so that he would love nothing better than to cling to his side unceasingly; but as for the object of that attachment, what kind of solace, I ask, or what pleasure, can he possibly receive in return to save him during all that long companionship from reaching the very extremity of disgust; when he has ever before his eyes the bloomless countenance of age, and that too with all those accompaniments which we cannot hear even spoken of without repugnance, much less feel actually forced upon us by an ever-pressing necessity; when he has, moreover, on every occasion, and in all company to be on his guard against censorious observation; when he has to listen either to unseasonable and extravagant praises, or, with equal probability, to unendurable reproaches from his lover's sober caprice, while from his drunken excess he may expect an unveiled and loathsome licentiousness of speech, which is not only intolerable, but infamous to hear.

And if, during the continuance of his passion, a lover is at once hurtful and disgusting, as surely, when his passion is over, will he be for the remainder of his life a traitor to one whom with many promises, aye, and many an oath and prayer he could scarcely prevail on to endure the present burden of his society in hope of 241

future advantage. Yes, I say, at the time when payment should be made, he finds that he has received within his breast a new ruler and a new lord, to wit, wisdom and temperance, in the stead of passion and madness, and that he is become a new man, without his favourite being conscious of the change. So the youth demands a return for former favours, and reminds him of all that has passed between them in word and deed, under the impression that he is speaking to the same person. But the other, for very shame, dares neither avow the alteration that has come upon him, nor can he bring himself to fulfil the oaths and promises of that former insensate reign, now that wisdom and temperance have set their throne in his heart, for fear that, if he should act as he did before, he might become like what he was before, and return back again to his old condition. And thus it is that he is a runaway, and of necessity a defrauder, where once he was a lover, and in the turning of a potsherd is changed from pursuer into pursued: for the youth is compelled to give chase with indignation and curses, having, alas! been ignorant from the very first, that he ought not to bestow his favours on one who was in love, and of consequence a madman, but much rather on one who did not love and retained his senses; as in the former case he would have to surrender himself to a faithless, peevish, jealous wretch, who would do harm to his substance, and harm to his bodily habit, but far the greatest harm to the cultivation of his soul, than which in the eyes both of gods and men there neither is nor ever will be ought more dearly prized. Think deeply, my beautiful boy, on the words I have spoken, and remember that a lover's friendship is no attachment of good will, but that with an appetite which lusts for repletion,

> As wolves love lambs, so lovers love their loves.

Ah, Phædrus, the very thing I dreaded! You must not expect to hear another word from me, but be content that my speech should terminate here.

Phæd. Why, Socrates, I thought it was only half

finished, and that it would have quite as much to say in supporting the claim of the unimpassioned suitor, and enumerating the advantages which he has to offer in opposition. How is it then that you are leaving off now?

Socrates. Did you not observe, my learned friend, that I had already got beyond dithyrambics, and was giving utterance to epics, and that too, while engaged in blaming? Pray what do you imagine will become of me, if I commence a panegyric? don't you know that of a certainty I shall be lifted into ecstasy by the nymphs to whose influence you have designedly exposed me? For fear then of such a fate, I tell you in a single word, that for all the evil I have spoken of the one, I attribute just the opposite good to the other. And what need of a protracted discourse, when enough has been said upon both sides? And thus my tale will meet with that reception which it deserves: and for myself I will cross the stream, and go home before you force me into some- 242
thing more serious still.

Phæd. Not yet, Socrates, not till the heat of the day is past. Don't you see that the sun is already near standing still at high noon, as they phrase it? so pray wait, and let us talk over together what has been said, and return home as soon as it becomes cool.

Socrates. You are a strange person with your speeches, Phædrus; you quite amaze me. I do believe, that of all the speeches that have been composed during your lifetime, a greater number owe their existence to you than to any other person in the world, whether they be of your own composition, or extorted from some one else by fair means or foul. If we except Simmias of Thebes, there is no one who will bear competition with you. And now again I believe we shall find another speech which will have to thank you for its delivery.

Phæd. No bad tidings these, certainly; but how is this the case, and what speech do you mean?

Socrates. Just as I was about to cross the river, I was made aware of my divine monitor's wonted sign—now it never occurs save to deter me from something or other I am intending to do—and methought too, that I

heard a voice from this very spot, forbidding me to depart hence till I had purified myself, as though I had been guilty of some offence against Heaven. Now, you must know, I possess something of prophetic skill, though no very great amount, but, like indifferent writers, just enough for my own purposes. And thus it is that I have now at last a clear perception of my error. I say at last, because I can assure you, my good friend, that the soul is in some sort prophetic. For mine pricked me some time ago, as I was uttering that speech, and my face, as Ibycus says, was darkened for fear lest I might be purchasing honour on earth by some offence at the high court of heaven. But now I have discovered my sin.

Phæd. And pray what is it?

Socrates. That was a shocking, shocking speech which you brought here yourself, Phædrus, and so was the one you forced me to utter.

Phæd. In what way were they shocking?

Socrates. They were foolish, and somewhat impious withal; and what can be more shocking than this?

Phæd. Nothing, if your charge be a true one.

Socrates. And is it not? Don't you believe Love to be the son of Aphrodite, and a god?

Phæd. He is said to be so, certainly.

Socrates. Certainly not by Lysias, nor by that speech of yours which found utterance through my lips after they had been bewitched by you. No, if Love be, as indeed he is, a god, or of godly sort, he cannot be aught that is evil; yet as such he is represented in both our speeches. This, therefore, is the offence they were guilty of with regard to Love; and not only this, but with a *naïveté* that is highly amusing, though they do not utter a single sound or true word throughout, they yet talk as gravely as if they were of consequence, on
243 the strength, it may be, of expecting to impose upon some poor simpletons, and win a fair name among them. I therefore, for my part, Phædrus, must of necessity purify myself. And for all who sin in matter of legends, there is an ancient form of purification with which Stesichorus was acquainted, though Homer was

not. For when he was deprived of his eyesight for maligning Helen, he was not ignorant, like Homer, of the cause, but a true votary of the Muses, he learnt his fault, and straightway sang

> False was my tale—unpassed the rolling sea,
> And Troy's proud turrets never viewed by thee.

And so, having composed all his palinode, as it is called, he immediately recovered his sight. I, however, will be wiser than either of those bards in one particular. Ere any evil befall me, for my defamation of Love, I will offer him my palinode by way of atonement, with my head bare, and no longer, as before, muffled up for shame.

Phæd. You could not have said anything that would give me greater pleasure than this.

Socrates. I believe you, my good friend; for you feel as well as I do, how shameless was the tone of both our speeches. For just conceive their being overheard by some gentleman of mild and generous feeling, who is either now, or has at some time past of his life been, enamoured of a youth of congenial disposition. If, for instance, he were to hear us maintaining that on slight provocation lovers contract violent animosities, and make both jealous and dangerous companions to their favourites, do you think it possible that he could help fancying himself listening to persons who had been bred among sailors, and had never witnessed an ingenuous passion, and would he not, think you, be very far from admitting the justice of our censures on love?

Phæd. I don't doubt it, Socrates.

Socrates. Out of delicacy then to such a lover as this, and for fear of the god of love himself, I desire by a fresh and sweet discourse to wash out, so to speak, the brackish taste of the stuff I have just uttered. And I would recommend Lysias, too, to make all the haste he can to prove that, under similar circumstances, the suit of a lover should be preferred to that of one who is not in love.

Phæd. You need have no doubt of this being done, Socrates. If you deliver your panegyric on love, Lysias

most certainly shall not escape composing another on the same side.

Socrates. Well, I can trust you for this, so long as you are the man you are.

Phæd. Speak on then with confidence.

Socrates. But where, I want to know, is the boy to whom I addressed my former speech, as I should be sorry for him to run away without hearing this as well, and favour in his haste the suit of an unimpassioned wooer.

Phæd. Here he is by your side, quite ready for you when you want him.

Socrates. You must understand then, my beautiful
244 boy, that my late speech was the production of the gay Phædrus, son of the fame-loving Pythocles, the nursling of the myrtle-beds of Myrrhinus; but that I am indebted for the one I am now about to deliver to the inspired bard Stesichorus, son of the holy Euphemus, bred at Himera in the mysteries of love. Now, it must begin on this wise:

False is the tale which says that when a lover is present, favour ought rather to be shown to one, who is no lover, on the score, forsooth, of the one being mad and the other sane. For if it were true, without exception, that madness is an evil, there would be no harm in the assertion; but as it is, we owe our greatest blessings to madness, if only it be granted by Heaven's bounty. For the prophetess at Delphi, you are well aware, and the priestesses of Dodona, have in their moments of madness done great and glorious service to the men and the cities of Greece, but little or none in their sober mood. And if we were to speak of the Sibyl and all others, that by exercise of inspired divination have told beforehand many things to many men, and thereby guided them aright in their future courses, we should run to a great length in telling only what every one knows. There is one fact, however, to which it would be worth our while solemnly to appeal; I mean that, in the opinion of the name-givers of ancient times, madness was no disgrace or reproach; else they would never have attached this very name to that most glorious art

whereby the future is discerned. No, it was because they judged of it as a glorious thing when inspired by Heaven's grace, that they gave it the name of μανική: it is only the vulgar taste of a later age, that by inserting the *tau* has made it μαντική instead. Since you will find, in like manner, that the investigation of the future, which is carried on by people in their senses through the medium of birds and other signs, received at first the name of οἰονοϊστική, inasmuch as by means of thought, men furnished themselves out of their own minds with intelligence and information; but moderns, not content with this word, gave it dignity with their long *o*, and called it οἰωνιστική. As much then as divination is a more perfect, and a more precious thing than augury both in name and efficiency, so much more glorious, by the testimony of the ancients, is madness than sober sense, the inspiration of Heaven than the creation of men. Again, for those sore plagues and dire afflictions, which you are aware lingered in certain families as the wraith of some old ancestral guilt, madness devised a remedy, after it had entered into the heart of the proper persons, and to the proper persons revealed its secrets; for it fled for refuge to prayer and services of the gods, and thence obtaining purifications and atoning rights, it made the sufferer whole for time present and time to come, by showing him the way of escape from the evils that encompassed him, if only he were rightly frenzied and possessed. And thirdly, there is a possession and a madness inspired by the Muses, which seizes upon a 245
tender and a virgin soul, and, stirring it up to rapturous frenzy, adorns in ode and other verse the countless deeds of elder time for the instruction of after ages. But whosoever without the madness of the Muses comes to knock at the doors of poesy, from the conceit that haply by force of art he will become an efficient poet, departs with blasted hopes, and his poetry, the poetry of sense, fades into obscurity before the poetry of madness.

Such, and yet more, are the glorious results I can tell you of as proceeding from a madness inspired by the gods. Let us not therefore regard with apprehension

the particular result we are considering, nor be perplexed and frightened by any arguments into the belief that we ought to select the sensible rather than the enraptured man as our friend. No, our opponent must not carry off the palm of victory till he has likewise made it evident, that for no good is love sent from heaven to lover and beloved. With us, on the other hand, rests the proof that such a madness as this is given by God to man for his highest possible happiness. Now my proof, I am aware, will meet with no credit from the subtle disputant, but in the eyes of the truly wise it will be convincing. First of all, then, I must investigate the truth with regard to the nature of the soul, both human and divine, by observing its conditions and powers. And thus do I begin my demonstration.

Every soul is immortal—for whatever is in perpetual motion is immortal. Now the thing which moves another and is by another moved, as it may cease to be moved, may cease also to live; it is only that which moves itself, inasmuch as it never quits itself, that never ceases moving, but is to everything else that is moved a source and beginning of motion. Now a beginning is uncreate; for everything that is created must be created from a beginning, but a beginning itself from nothing whatever: for if a beginning were created from anything, it would not be a beginning. Again, since it is uncreate, it must also of necessity be indestructible. For if a beginning be destroyed, it can neither itself be at any time created from anything, nor can anything else be created from it, if, as is evidently true, everything must be created from a beginning. Thus we see then that that which is self-moved is the beginning of motion, and as being such can neither be created nor destroyed; else must all the universe and all creation collapse and come to a standstill, and never at any time find that whereby they may be again set in motion and come into being. And now that that which is moved by itself has been found to be immortal, none will hesitate to assert that this power of self-motion is implied in the very essence and definition of a soul. For every body which receives motion from without we call soulless;

but that which receives motion from within of itself, we say is possessed of soul, as though in this lay the soul's very nature. And if it be true, that that which is self-moved is nothing else than the soul, it follows of necessity that the soul must be a thing both uncreate and 246
immortal. For its immortality let this suffice.

In considering its form let us proceed in the following manner. To explain what the soul is, would be a long and most assuredly a god-like labour; to say what it resembles, is a shorter and a human task. Let us attempt then the latter; let us say that the soul resembles the combined efficacy of a pair of winged steeds and a charioteer. Now the horses and drivers of the gods are all both good themselves and of good extraction, but the character and breed of all others is mixed. In the first place, with us men the supreme ruler has a pair of horses to manage, and then of these horses he finds one generous and of generous breed, the other of opposite descent and opposite character. And thus it necessarily follows that driving in our case is no easy or agreeable work. We must at this point endeavour to express what we mean respectively by a mortal and an immortal animal. All that is soul presides over all that is without soul, and patrols all heaven, now appearing in one form and now in another. When it is perfect and fully feathered it roams in upper air, and regulates the entire universe; but the soul that has lost its feathers is carried down till it finds some solid resting place; and when it has settled there, when it has taken to itself, that is, an earthly body, which seems capable of self-motion, owing to the power of its new inmate, the name of animal is given to the whole, to this compound, I mean, of soul and body, with the addition of the epithet mortal. The immortal, on the other hand, has received its name from the conclusion of no human reasoning; but without having either seen or formed any adequate conception of a god, we picture him to ourselves as an immortal animal, possessed of soul and possessed of body, and of both in intimate conjunction from all eternity. But this matter I leave to be and to be told as Heaven pleases—my task is to discover what is the cause that makes the

feathers fall off the soul. It is something, I conceive, of the following kind.

The natural efficacy of a wing is to lift up heavy substances, and bear them aloft to those upper regions which are inhabited by the race of the gods. And of all the parts connected with the body it has perhaps shared most largely (with the soul) in the divine nature. Now of this nature are beauty, wisdom, virtue, and all similar qualities. By these then the plumage of the soul is chiefly fostered and increased; by deformity, vice, and all such contraries, it is wasted and destroyed. Zeus, the great chieftain in heaven, driving a winged car, travels first, arranging and presiding over all things; and after him comes a host of gods and inferior deities,
247 marshalled in eleven divisions, for Hestia stays at home alone in the mansion of the gods; but all the other ruling powers that have their place in the number of the twelve march at the head of a troop in the order to which they have been severally appointed. Now there are, it is true, many ravishing views and opening paths within the bounds of heaven, whereon the family of the blessed gods go to and fro, each in performance of his own proper work; and they are followed by all who from time to time possess both will and power; for envy has no place in the celestial choir. But whenever they go to feast and revel, they forthwith journey by an uphill path to the summit of the heavenly vault. Now the chariots of the gods being of equal poise, and obedient to the rein, move easily, but all others with difficulty; for they are burdened by the horse of vicious temper which sways and sinks them towards the earth, if haply he has received no good training from his charioteer. Whereupon there awaits the soul a crowning pain and agony. For those which we called immortal go outside when they are come to the topmost height, and stand on the outer surface of heaven, and as they stand they are borne round by its revolution, and gaze on the external scene. Now of that region beyond the sky no earthly bard has ever yet sung, or ever will sing in worthy strains. But this is the fashion of it; for sure I must venture to speak the truth, especially as truth

is my theme. Real existence, colourless, formless, and intangible, visible only to the intelligence which sits at the helm of the soul, and with which the family of true science is concerned, has its abode in this region. The mind then of deity, as it is fed by intelligence and pure science, and the mind of every soul that is destined to receive its due inheritance, is delighted at seeing the essence to which it has been so long a stranger, and by the light of truth is fostered and made to thrive, until, by the revolution of the heaven, it is brought round again to the same point. And during the circuit it sees distinctly absolute justice, and absolute temperance, and absolute science; not such as they appear in creation, nor under the variety of forms to which we now-a-days give the name of realities, but the justice, the temperance, the science, which exist in that which is real and essential being. And when in like manner it has seen all the rest of the world of essence, and feasted on the sight, it sinks down again into the interior of heaven, and returns to its own home. And on its arrival, the charioteer takes his horses to the manger, and sets before them ambrosia, and gives them nectar to drink with it. Such is the life of the gods; but of the 248
other souls, that which follows a god most closely and resembles him most nearly, succeeds in raising the head of its charioteer into the outer region, and is carried round with the immortals in their revolution, though sore encumbered by its horses, and barely able to contemplate the real existences; while another rises and sinks by turns, his horses plunging so violently that he can discern no more than a part of these existences. But the common herd follow at a distance, all of them indeed burning with desire for the upper world, but, failing to reach it, they make the revolution in the moisture of the lower element, trampling on one another, and striking against one another, in their efforts to rush one before the other. Hence ensues the extremest turmoil and struggling and sweating; and herein, by the awkwardness of the drivers, many souls are maimed, and many lose many feathers in the crush; and all after painful labour go away without being blessed by admis-

sion to the spectacle of truth, and thenceforth live on the food of mere opinion.

And now will I tell you the motives of this great anxiety to behold the fields of truth. The suitable pasturage for the noblest portion of the soul is grown on the meadows there, and it is the nature of the wing, which bears aloft the soul, to be fostered thereby; and moreover, there is an irrevocable decree, that if any soul has followed a god in close companionship and discerned any of the true essences, it shall continue free from harm till the next revolution, and if it be ever thus successful, it shall be ever thus unharmed: but whenever, from inability to follow, it has missed that glorious sight, and, through some mishap it may have encountered, has become charged with forgetfulness and vice, and been thereby so burdened as to shed its feathers and fall to the earth, in that case there is a law that the soul thus fallen be not planted in any bestial nature during the first generation, but that if it has seen more than others of essential verity, it pass into the germ of a man who is to become a lover of wisdom, or a lover of beauty, or some votary of the Muses and Love; if it be of second rank, it is to enter the form of a constitutional ruler, a warrior, or a man fitted for command; the third will belong to a politician, or economist, or merchant; the fourth, to a laborious professor of gymnastics, or some disciple of the healing art; the fifth will be possessed by a soothsayer, or some person connected with mysteries; the sixth will be best suited by the life of a poet or some other imitative artist; the seventh, by the labour of an artisan or a farmer; the eighth, by the trade of a sophist or a demagogue; and the ninth, by the lot of an absolute monarch. And in all these various conditions those who have lived justly receive afterwards a better lot, those who have lived unjustly, a worse. For to that same place from which each soul set out, it does not return for ten thousand years; so long is it
249 before it recovers its plumage, unless it has belonged to a guileless lover of philosophy, or a philosophic lover of boys. But these souls, during their third millennium, if only they have chosen thrice in succession this form of

existence, do in this case regain their feathers, and at its conclusion wing their departure. But all the rest are, on the termination of their first life, brought to trial; and, according to their sentence, some go to the prison-houses beneath the earth, to suffer for their sins, while others, by virtue of their trial, are borne lightly upwards to some celestial spot, where they pass their days in a manner worthy of the life they have lived in their mortal form. But in the thousandth year both divisions come back again to share and choose their second life, and they select that which they severally please. And then it is that a human soul passes into the life of a beast, and from a beast who was once a man the soul comes back into a man again. For the soul which has never seen the truth at all can never enter into the human form; it being a necessary condition of a man that he should apprehend according to that which is called a generic form, which, proceeding from a variety of perceptions, is by reflection combined into unity. And this is nothing more nor less than a recollection of those things which in time past our soul beheld when it travelled in the company of the gods, and, looking high over what we now call real, lifted up its head into the region of eternal essence. And thus you see it is with justice, that the mind of the philosopher alone recovers its plumage, for to the best of its power it is ever fixed in memory on that glorious spectacle, by the contemplation of which the godhead is divine. And it is only by the right use of such memorials as these, and by ever perfecting himself in perfect mysteries, that a man becomes really perfect. But because such an one stands aloof from human interests, and is rapt in contemplation of the divine, he is taken to task by the multitude as a man demented, because the multitude do not see that he is by God inspired.

It will now appear what conclusion the whole course of our argument has reached with regard to the fourth kind of madness, with which a man is inspired whenever, by the sight of beauty in this lower world, the true beauty of the world above is so brought to his remembrance that he begins to recover his plumage,

and feeling new wings, longs to soar aloft, but the power failing him, gazes upward like a bird, and becomes heedless of all lower matters, thereby exposing himself to the imputation of being crazed. And the conclusion is this, that of all kinds of enthusiasm this is the best, as well in character as in origin, for those who possess it, whether fully or in part; and further, that he who loves beautiful objects must partake of this madness before he can deserve the name of lover. For though, as I said before, every man's soul has by the law of his birth been a spectator of eternal truth, or it
250 would never have passed into this our mortal frame, yet still it is no easy matter for all to be reminded of their past by their present existence. It is not easy either for those who, during that struggle I told you of, caught but a brief glimpse of upper glories, nor for those who, after their fall to this world, were so unfortunate as to be turned aside by evil associations into the paths of wickedness, and so made to forget that holy spectacle. Few, few only are there left, with whom the world of memory is duly present. And these few, whenever they see here any resemblance of what they witnessed there, are struck with wonder, and can no longer contain themselves, though what it is that thus affects them they know not, for want of sufficient discernment. Now in the likenesses existing here of justice, and temperance, and all else which souls hold precious, there is no brightness; but through the medium of dull dim instruments, it is but seldom and with difficulty that people are enabled on meeting with the copies to recognize the character of the original. But beauty not only shone brightly on our view at the time when in the heavenly choir we, for our part, followed in the band of Zeus, as others in the bands of other gods, and saw that blissful sight and spectacle, and were initiated into that mystery which I fear not to pronounce the most blessed of all mysteries; for we who celebrated it were perfect and untainted by the evil that awaited us in time to come, and perfect too, and simple, and calm, and blissful were the visions which we were solemnly admitted to gaze upon in the purest light,

ourselves being no less pure, nor as yet entombed in that which we now drag about with us and call the body, being fettered to it as an oyster to his shell. Excuse my so far indulging memory, which has carried me to a greater length than I intended, in my yearning for a happiness that is past. I return to beauty. Not only, as I said before, did she shine brightly among her fellows there, but when we came hither we found her, through the medium of our clearest sense, gleaming far more clearly than them all. For sight is the keenest of our bodily senses, though it fails of distinguishing wisdom. For terrible would be the passion inspired by her, or by any other of those lovely realities, if they exhibited to the eye of sense any such clear resemblance of themselves as is the image afforded by beauty. No, to beauty alone is the privilege given of being at once most conspicuous and most lovely. The man, it is true, whose initiation is of ancient date, or who has lost his purity here, is slow in being carried hence to the essential beauty of the upper world, when he sees that which bears its name in this. Accordingly, he feels no reverence as he gazes on the beautiful object, but, abandoning himself to lust, attempts like a brute beast to gratify his appetite, and in his wanton approaches knows nor fear nor shame at this unnatural pursuit of pleasure. But whenever one who is fresh from those 251
mysteries, who saw much of that heavenly vision, beholds in any god-like face or form a successful copy of original beauty, he first of all feels a shuddering chill, and there creep over him some of those terrors that assailed him in that dire struggle; then, as he continues to gaze, he is inspired with a reverential awe, and did he not fear the repute of exceeding madness, he would offer sacrifice to his beloved as to the image of a god. Afterwards follow the natural results of his chill, a sudden change, a sweating and glow of unwonted heat. For he has received through his eyes the emanation of beauty, and has been warmed thereby, and his native plumage is watered. And by the warmth the parts where the feathers sprout are softened, after having been long so closed up by their hardness as to hinder

the feathers from growing. But as soon as this nourishing shower pours in, the quill of the feather begins to swell, and struggles to start up from the root, and spread beneath the whole surface of the soul; for in old time the soul was entirely feathered.

In this process, therefore, it boils and throbs all over, and exactly the same sensation which is experienced by children when cutting their teeth, a sensation of itching and soreness about their gums, is experienced by the soul of one who is beginning to put forth new wings; it boils and is sore, and tingles as it shoots its feathers. Whenever, indeed, by gazing on the beauty of the beloved object, and receiving from that beauty particles which fall and flow in upon it (and which are therefore called ἵμερος, desire), the soul is watered and warmed, it is relieved from its pain, and is glad; but as soon as it is parted from its love, and for lack of that moisture is parched, the mouths of the outlets, by which the feathers start, become so closed up by drought, that they obstruct the shooting germs; and the germs being thus confined underneath, in company of the desire which has been infused, leap like throbbing arteries, and prick each at the outlet which is shut against it; so that the soul, being stung all over, is frantic with pain. But then again it calls to mind the beautiful one, and rejoices. And both these feelings being combined, it is sore perplexed by the strangeness of its condition, and not knowing what to do with itself, becomes frenzied, and in its frenzy can neither sleep by night, nor by day remain at rest, but runs to and fro with wistful look wherever it may expect to see the possessor of the beauty. And after it has seen him, and drunk in fresh streams of desire, it succeeds in opening the stoppages which absence had made, and taking breath, it enjoys a respite from sting and throe, and now again delights itself for the time being in that most delicious
252 pleasure. And therefore, if it can help, it never quits the side of its beloved, nor holds any one of more account than him, but forgets father and mother, and brothers, and friends, and though its substance be wasting by neglect, it regards that as nothing, and of all observances and decorums, on which it prided itself

once, it now thinks scorn, and is ready to be a slave and lie down as closely as may be allowed to the object of its yearnings; for, besides its reverence for the possessor of beauty, it has found in him the sole physician for its bitterest pains. Now this affection, my beautiful boy—you I mean to whom my speech is addressed—is called by mortals Eros (Love); on hearing its name among the gods, your young wit will naturally laugh. There are put forth, if I mistake not, by certain Homerids, out of their secret poems, two verses on Eros, of which the second is quite outrageous, and not at all particularly metrical. Thus they sing:

> Him mortals indeed call winged Eros,
> But immortals Peteros (Flyer), for his flighty nature.

Now these verses you may believe or not believe, as you think proper; but whatever is thought of them, the cause of love, and the condition of lovers, is all the same, just as such as has been here stated.

Now, if it be one of the former followers of Zeus who is seized by love, he is able to bear in greater weight than others the burden of the wing-named god. But all who were in the service of Ares, and patrolled the heavens in his company, when they are taken captive by Love, and fancy themselves in aught injured by the object of their love, are thirsty of blood, and ready to immolate both themselves and their favourites. And so it is with the followers of the other gods. Every man spends his life in honouring and imitating to the best of his power that particular god of whose choir he was a member, so long as he is exempt from decay, and living his first generation here; and in keeping with the bent thus acquired, he conducts his intercourse and behaviour towards the beloved object, as well as all the world. Accordingly, each man chooses himself his love out of the ranks of beauty to suit his peculiar turn; and then, as though his choice were his god, he builds him up for himself, and attires him like a holy image, for the purpose of doing him reverence, and worshipping him with ecstatic festival. They then that belong to Zeus seek to have for their beloved one who resembles Zeus in his

soul. And so they look for a youth who is by nature a lover of wisdom, and fitted for command; and when they have found one, and become enamoured of him, they strive all they can to make him truly such. And if they have never previously entered upon this task, they now apply themselves to it, both seeking instruction from every possible quarter, and searching in their own souls. And this endeavour to discover the nature
253 of their patron god, by following the track in themselves, is attended with success, by reason of their being ever constrained to gaze upon their god unflinchingly; and when they grasp him with their memory, they are inspired with his inspiration, and take from him their character and habits, so far as it is possible for man to partake of god. And attributing these blessings to their beloved, they love him still more dearly than ever; and whatever streams they may have drawn from Zeus, like the inspired draughts of the Bacchanals, they pour into their darling's soul, thereby making him resemble, as far as possible, the god whom they resemble themselves. Those again who followed in the train of Hera, search out a youth of kingly mould, and when he is found, act towards him in exactly the same manner as the former. And so it is with the adherents of Apollo, and all other gods. Walking themselves in the steps of their own proper god, they look for the youth whom they are to love to be of kindred nature; and when they have gained such an one, both by imitation on their own part, and by urging and attuning the soul of their beloved, they guide him into the particular pursuit and character of that god, so far as they are severally able, not treating him with jealous or illiberal harshness, but using every endeavour to bring him into all possible conformity with themselves and the god whom they adore. So beautiful is the desire of those who truly love; and if they accomplish their desire, so beautiful is the initiation, as I call it, into their holy mystery, and so fraught with blessing at the hand of the friend, whom love has maddened, to the object of the friendship, if he be but won. Now he who is won, is won in the following manner.

As at the commencement of this account I divided every soul into three parts, two of them resembling horses, and the third a charioteer, so let us here still keep to that division. Now of the horses one, if you remember, we said, was good, and the other bad; but wherein consists the goodness of the one, and the badness of the other, is a point which, not distinguished then, must be stated now. That horse of the two which occupies the nobler rank, is in form erect and firmly knit, high-necked, hook-nosed, white-coloured, black-eyed; he loves honour with temperance and modesty, and, a votary of genuine glory, he is driven without stroke of the whip by voice and reason alone. The bad horse, on the other hand, is crooked, bulky, clumsily put together, with thick neck, short throat, flat face, black coat, grey and bloodshot eyes, a friend to all riot and insolence, shaggy about the ears, dull of hearing, scarce yielding to lash and goad united. Whenever therefore the driver sees the sight which inspires love, and his whole soul being thoroughly heated by sense, is surcharged with irritation and the stings of desire, the obedient horse, yielding then as ever to the check of 254
shame, restrains himself from springing on the loved one; but the other pays heed no longer to his driver's goad or lash, but struggles on with unruly bounds, and doing all violence to his yoke-fellow and master, forces them to approach the beautiful youth, and bethink themselves of the joys of dalliance. And though at first they resist him with indignation at the lawless and fearful crime he is urging, yet at last when there is no end to the evil, they move onward as he leads them, having yielded him submission and agreed to do his bidding. So they all come up to the beautiful boy, and see his countenance gleaming with beauty. But as the driver looks, his memory is carried back to the essence of beauty, and again he sees her by the side of Continence standing on a holy pedestal. And at the sight he shudders, and with a holy awe falls backward to the ground, and falling cannot help pulling back the reins so violently that he brings both the horses on their haunches, the one indeed willingly, because he is not

resisting, but the rebel in spite of struggling. And when they are withdrawn to some distance, the former in his shame and ravishment drenches all the soul with sweat, but the other when he is recovered from the pain which the bit and the fall inflicted, and has with difficulty regained his breath, breaks out into passionate revilings, vehemently railing at his master and his comrade for their treacherous cowardice in deserting their ranks and agreement. And again he urges them, again refusing, to approach, and barely yields a reluctant consent when they beg to defer the attempt to another time. But soon as the covenanted time is come, though they affect forgetfulness, he reminds them of their engagement, and plunging and neighing and dragging, he again obliges them to approach the beautiful youth to make the same proposals. And when they are near, he stoops his head and gets the bit between his teeth, and drags them on incontinently. But the driver experiences, though still more strongly, the same sensation as at first; backward he falls like racers at the barrier, and with a wrench still more violent than before pulls back the bit from between the teeth of the riotous horse, thereby drenching his jaws and railing tongue with blood; and bruising against the ground his legs and haunches, consigns him to anguish. But as soon as by this treatment oft repeated, the evil horse is recovered from his vice, he follows with humbled steps the guidance of his driver, and at sight of the fair one is consumed with terror. So that then, and not till then, does it happen that the soul of the lover follows his beloved with reverence and awe. And the consequence is, that
255 the youth being now worshipped with all the worship of a god, by a lover who does not feign the passion, but feels it in his soul, and being himself by nature fondly inclined to his worshipper, even though haply in time past he may have been set against lovers by the remarks of his school-fellows or others on the scandal of allowing their approaches, and is therefore disposed to reject his present wooer, yet now that the latter is thus changed he is led in course of time, by the instinct of his years, and the law of destiny, to admit him to familiarity. For

surely it was never destined for the bad to be friends of the bad, or the good aught but friendly to the good. But when the advances have been accepted and speech and intercourse allowed, the affection of the lover being brought into near connection with the loved one, strikes him with wonder, as it compels him to feel that the friendship shown him by all the rest of his friends and relations put together, is as nothing beside the love of his god-inspired friend. And if he continues long thus to indulge him, and allows him the closest contact both in gymnastic schools and other places of meeting, then it is that the stream of that effluence, to which Zeus when enamoured of Ganymedes gave the name of desire, pours upon the lover in a plenteous flood, and partly sinks within him, partly flows off him when he is full; and just as a wind or a noise rebounds from smooth and hard substances and is carried back again to the place from which it came; so the tide of beauty passes back into the beautiful boy through his eyes, the natural channel into his soul; and when it is come there and has fledged it anew, it waters the outlets of the feathers, and forcing them to shoot up afresh fills the soul of the loved one as well as that of his lover with love. He is in love therefore, but with whom he cannot say; nay, what it is that is come over him he knows not, neither can he tell, but like one who has caught a disease in the eye from the diseased gaze of another, he can assign no reason for the affection, but sees himself in his lover, as in a glass, without knowing who it is that he sees. And when they are together, he enjoys the same respite that his lover does from his anguish; but when they are parted, he yearns for him as he himself is yearned for, since he holds in his bosom love's reflected image, love returned. He calls it, however, and believes it to be not love but friendship, albeit, he feels the same desire as the other does, though in a feebler degree, for the sight, the touch, the kiss, the embrace. And consequently, as might be expected, his conduct thenceforward is as follows. When they are lying side by side, the lover's unbridled horse has much to say to its driver, and claims as the recompense of many labours

256 a short enjoyment; but the vicious horse of the other has nothing to say, but burning and restless clasps the lover and kisses him as he would kiss a dear friend, and when they are folded in each other's embrace, is just of such a temper as not for his part to refuse indulging the lover in any pleasure he might request to enjoy; but his yoke-fellow, on the other hand, joins the driver in struggling against him with chastity and reason. Should it appear then that the better part of their nature has led both the lover and loved into a life of order and philosophy, and established its own ascendancy, in bliss and harmony they live out their existence here, being masters of themselves and decorous before the world, having enslaved that portion of the soul wherein vice is contained, and liberated that where virtue dwells; and at last when they come to die, being winged and lightened, they have in one of their three truly Olympic combats achieved the prize, than which no greater good can either human prudence or godly madness bestow on man. But if they have given in to a coarser habit of life, and one unfriendly to wisdom, though not to honour, it may well happen that in a moment of drunkenness or like abandonment, those two unruly beasts will surprise the souls off their guard, and bringing them together into one place will choose and consummate that practice which the world deems happy, and once consummated will for the future indulge in it, though sparingly, as doing what is not approved by all their mind. Dear, therefore, to each other, though not so dear as the former two, do these continue both while their love is burning and when it is extinct; for they conceive themselves to have given and received the strongest pledges, which it were impious at any time to violate by becoming alienated. And in the end, without their wings it is true, but not without having started feathers, they go forth from the body, so that they carry off no paltry prize for their impassioned madness; for there is a law that the paths of darkness beneath the earth shall never again be trodden by those who have so much as set their foot on the heavenward road, but that walking hand in hand they shall live a bright and

blessed life, and when they recover their wings, recover them together for their love's sake.

So great and so godly, my beautiful boy, are the blessings which the affection of a lover will bestow. But the commerce of one who does not love, being alloyed with mortal prudence, and dispensing only mortal and niggardly gifts, will breed in the soul of the loved one a sordidness which the vulgar laud as virtue, and doom it for nine thousand years to be tossed about 257
the earth and under the earth without reason.

Here, to thee, beloved Eros, fair and good as I can make it, I offer and duly pay a recantation, composed perforce for sake of Phædrus, both in phrase and other points, in a poetic strain. But oh vouchsafe me pardon for my former speech and indulgence for this, and of thy tender mercy neither take from me the art of love, which thou hast given me, nor cripple it in thy wrath, but grant that still more than ever I may find favour in the eyes of the fair. And, if in our former speech, Phædrus and I said aught offensive to thee, set it to the account of Lysias as the father of the speech, and make him to cease from speeches of this sort, and turn him to philosophy, even as his brother Polemarchus is turned, in order that his lover also here before thee may no longer halt, as now, between two opinions, but heart and soul devote his life to love with philosophic talk.

Phæd. I join with you, Socrates, in praying that, if this lot be better for us, so it may befall us. With regard to the speech, however, it has been long exciting my admiration, so much more beautiful have you made it than your former one; so much more indeed that I am afraid I shall find Lysias making but a poor figure, if indeed he be willing to match it with another of his own. Which I have my doubts about. For it was only the other day that one of our public men in an attack he was making upon him, reproached him on this very score, and throughout his attack kept calling him a speech-writer. So that perhaps he may be led by a care for his own reputation to desist from the practice.

Socrates. Your notion is an absurd one, my young gentleman, and you are greatly mistaken in your

favourite, if you imagine him to be a person so readily scared. Perhaps you too believe that his assailant meant what he said.

Phæd. He certainly seemed to do so, Socrates; and besides, you must know as well as I do, that men of the greatest influence and consideration in a state are ashamed of writing speeches, and leaving behind them compositions of their own, for fear of obtaining with posterity the reputation and name of sophists.

Socrates. It has escaped you, Phædrus, that the phrase "A charming bend," is derived from that long and wearisome bend in the Nile; and so it escapes you that under this affected dislike, our most self-satisfied statesmen are especially fond of composing speeches, and leaving behind them writings; so much so indeed, that whenever they write a speech, they conceive such an affection for its supporters, that they write down in an additional clause at its head the names of those who on each occasion accord it their approval.

Phæd. How do you mean? I don't understand you.

258 *Socrates.* Don't you understand that at the beginning of a statesman's writing the name of its supporter is written first?

Phæd. How so?

Socrates. "Approved." Thus, if I am not mistaken, runs the writing: "Approved by the council, or people, or both." And the proposer, our speech-writer to wit, naming his worthy self with all pomp and panegyric, proceeds to make a speech, and to show off his wisdom to his supporters, not unfrequently by the composition of a very long writing. Or, do you conceive such a production as this to be something different from a written speech?

Phæd. No, I certainly don't.

Socrates. Well, if the speech stands, our poet goes home from his theatre rejoicing; but if it be erased, and he debarred from speech-writing, and the dignity of authorship, he goes into mourning, himself and his friends.

Phæd. So they do.

Socrates. Obviously not as disdaining the practice, but as viewing it with admiration.

Phæd. Precisely. 640-560 BC

Socrates. Again, whenever an orator or a monarch has been found equal to the task of assuming the authority of a Lycurgus, or a Solon, or a Darius, and becoming a speech-writer for immortality in a state, does not both he himself, during his life-time, look upon himself in the light of a god, and do not after ages conceive the same opinion of him, from a survey of his written works?

Phæd. To be sure they do.

Socrates. Do you believe then that a person of this sort, however strong his antipathy to Lysias, would attack him simply on the score of being a writer?

Phæd. It is not at any rate to be expected that he would from what you say; for in so doing he would to all appearance be attacking his own particular fancy.

Socrates. It must then, I think, be universally acknowledged, that there is no disgrace in the mere fact of writing speeches.

Phæd. How can there be?

Socrates. But the disgrace, I imagine, commences when they are composed not well, but awkwardly and ill.

Phæd. Obviously.

Socrates. What then is the character of good and bad writing? Ought we, think you, Phædrus, to take on this matter the evidence of Lysias, and of every one else who has either written or means to write a work, political or otherwise, either in metre as a poet, or without metre as a prose-writer?

Phæd. Do you ask if we ought? Why what other object can a man be said to live for, than the enjoyment of such pleasures as these? Surely not for those which must be preceded by pain, before they can be so much as enjoyed, which is the case you know with most of our bodily pleasures, so that they have been justly denominated servile.

Socrates. Well, we have time it seems to spare; and

moreover I cannot help fancying that the cicalas, while chirping and talking together over our heads, as is their wont in the heat of the day, have their eyes upon you
259 and me. Should they see us then, like common men, falling asleep instead of conversing in the middle of the day, and abandoning ourselves in laziness of soul to their lulling music, they would regard us with merited scorn, and fancy themselves looking upon some poor slaves, who had sought the refuge of their retreat, to take like sheep a mid-day nap by the waters of their well. But if they see us proceeding with our conversation, and sailing past them unenchanted by their siren strains, they may perhaps in their admiration confer on us that boon, which they have from the gods to bestow upon men.

Phæd. What boon is that? I do not remember to have heard of it.

Socrates. A lover of the Muses is the last person who should be ignorant of such matters as this. The story goes, that once upon a time these cicalas were men, of a race that lived before the birth of the Muses. But when the Muses were born, and song appeared, it came to pass that some of that race were so transported with pleasure, that as they sang they forgot to eat and drink, till death came upon them unawares. From them it is that the race of the cicalas are sprung, having received the boon from the Muses, that they should need no nourishment after they were come into the world, but spend their time in singing, without food or drink, from the moment of their birth to the day of their death, when they are to repair to the Muses, and tell each of them of their worshippers here below. Terpsichore they tell of those who have honoured her in the dance, and thus make them dearer to her than before: Erato they tell of her votaries in love, and so to each of the other sisters they make their report according to the character of her proper worship. But to Calliope the eldest, and Urania the second of the nine, they bear tidings of those who pass their lives in philosophic study and observance of their peculiar music, these we know being the Muses who, having heaven for their special

sphere, and words both divine and human, pour forth the gladdest strains. You see therefore, Phædrus, there are many reasons why we should talk and not slumber in the middle of the day.

Phæd. Indeed there are.

Socrates. Let us then, resuming the subject which we proposed to ourselves for consideration, examine in what consists a good or a bad discourse, whether spoken or written.

Phæd. Certainly.

Socrates. Is it not an essential condition of a good and fine speech being made, that the mind of the speaker be acquainted with the truth of the matter he is going to discuss?

Phæd. Why, I have heard men say on this subject, Socrates, that there is no need at all for the intended 260
orator to learn what is really just, but only what is likely to be considered just by the multitude who are to sit as judges; nor, again, what is really good and honourable, but only what will appear so; for by such appearances, they add, is persuasion effected, and not by truth.

Socrates. Sure we must not cast away a saying, Phædrus, which wise men have uttered, but rather examine whether there be anything in it or not. And so we must not refuse a hearing to your present remark.

Phæd. Certainly not.

Socrates. Let us consider it then in the following point of view. Suppose I were to set about persuading you to buy a horse for the purposes of war, but neither of us knew what a horse was; only this much I did happen to know, that my friend Phædrus believed a horse to be that domestic animal which has the longest ears.

Phæd. Why, it would be absurd, Socrates.

Socrates. Wait a moment. What if I were to proceed in a tone of serious persuasion, and compose a panegyric on the ass, all the while calling him a horse, and saying that he was a creature of infinite value, not only for domestic purposes, but also on military service, as he was both convenient to fight from, and capable

of bringing up baggage, and of being made useful in a thousand other ways?

Phæd. Well, there can be no doubt of its being utterly absurd now, at any rate.

Socrates. Is it not better though to be absurd, than a dangerous and malevolent friend?

Phæd. Doubtless it is.

Socrates. Whenever then an orator, who is ignorant of good and evil, finds a people in a state of similar ignorance, and takes upon himself to persuade them by passing an eulogium, not upon a poor ass as though it were a horse, but upon evil as though it were good; and when, by having studied and learned the popular opinions, he has succeeded in persuading them to do that which is evil instead of that which is good, what kind of fruit do you imagine his oratory will hereafter reap as the harvest of the seed she has sown?

Phæd. No very good one, certainly.

Socrates. Is it not possible, though, my good Phædrus, that we have been somewhat too rough in our attack on rhetoric? may she not turn upon us and say, What's all this trifling, ye wondrous wise? I force no man to learn speaking without a knowledge of the truth; on the contrary, if my advice be worth anything, he will acquire the truth before he comes to me. But what I do insist on is this, that without my aid he will not be a whit the better able, for all his knowledge of truth, to persuade according to art.

Phæd. And do you not admit the justice of her plea?

Socrates. I do, provided only the arguments which are coming up to attack her testify to her being an art. For methinks I hear the rustle of certain arguments approaching, and protesting that she is an impostor and no art at all, but an inartistic knack. But of speaking, says the Spartan, there neither is, nor ever shall be, genuine art without the grasp of truth.

261 *Phæd.* We must have your arguments, Socrates, bring them here into court, and examine what it is they say, and how they say it.

Socrates. Hither then, fine creatures, and persuade Phædrus, father of a fair progeny like you, that if he be

not a competent philosopher, neither at any time will he be a competent speaker on any subject at all. And let Phædrus reply.

Phæd. Put your questions.

Socrates. May not rhetoric in general be considered as a method of winning men's souls by means of words, not only in courts of law, and other public assemblies, but also in private conversation indifferently on matters great and small; and is not its correct use held in equal honour whether the subject to which it is applied be trivial or important? Or what have you heard say on the matter?

Phæd. Why nothing at all of this kind, I can assure you. No, the courts of law are the especial sphere of rhetorical art, and it is also employed in addressing deliberative assemblies; but I never heard of its extending further.

Socrates. What, have you only heard of the arts of speaking composed by Nestor and Ulysses, to while away their leisure before Troy? and have you never heard of those by Palamedes?

Phæd. No, nor of Nestor's either, unless you are making a Nestor of Gorgias, and a Ulysses of Thrasymachus or Theodorus.

Socrates. Possibly I am. However, to leave these gentlemen for the present, answer me this. In a court of justice, what is it that the contending parties do? Contradict each other, do they not?

Phæd. Precisely.

Socrates. On points of right and wrong?

Phæd. Yes.

Socrates. And if a man does this by rule of art, he will make the same thing appear to the same people to be at one time right, and at another, if he pleases, wrong.

Phæd. Of course.

Socrates. And so in a popular harangue he will make the public believe the same line of conduct to be at one time for their advantage, and at another time just the reverse.

Phæd. Certainly he will.

Socrates. But do we not also hear of the Eleatic Palamedes speaking by aid of art in such a manner that his hearers believed the same things to be at once like and unlike, one and many, at rest and in motion?

Phæd. Undoubtedly we do.

Socrates. It appears, then, that the art of debate is not confined either to courts of law or popular assemblies, but that to everything that is said we are able to apply this single art, if art it is, by which we shall be enabled to make all things appear similar that are capable of so appearing, and to drag to the light all such attempts in others, however dexterously concealed.

Phæd. I don't quite understand what you mean by this.

Socrates. My meaning will, I think, be apparent, if we conduct our inquiry thus. Is deception more generally practised in things which differ much or little?

262 *Phæd.* In those which differ little.

Socrates. And you will get round, I conceive, from one side to the other, with less chance of detection, by taking short steps than long ones.

Phæd. Unquestionably.

Socrates. If one man, then, would fain deceive another, without being deceived himself, he ought to be able to discriminate accurately the resemblances and differences of things.

Phæd. Nay, he *must* be able.

Socrates. But if he be ignorant of the true nature of a particular thing, will he be in a condition to distinguish between a greater and less resemblance to it in other things?

Phæd. Impossible.

Socrates. Whenever, therefore, people are deceived, and form opinions wide of the truth, it is clear that the error has slid into their minds through the medium of certain resemblances to that truth.

Phæd. Such no doubt is generally the case.

Socrates. Is it possible, then, for a man ever to possess the art of bringing over the mind of another from truth to falsehood, by leading it from link to link in the chain of resemblances, or to escape such delusion

himself, without having first arrived at an understanding of the true nature of each particular thing?

Phæd. No, never.

Socrates. An art of speaking then, composed by one, who, without a knowledge of the truth, has entrapped men's opinions, will present, I conceive, but a sorry and inartistic appearance.

Phæd. I apprehend so.

Socrates. Now, Phædrus, what say you to our taking the speech of Lysias, which you have got in your hand, together with those of mine which followed, and looking for instances in them of what we maintain to be in accordance with, or in violation of, art?

Phæd. I should like it of all things; since there is a sort of baldness in our present way of treating the subject, arising from a want of proper examples.

Socrates. True, and by some lucky chance, as I take it, both the speeches were made to afford an example of the manner in which an author, who is himself acquainted with the truth, may for mere amusement lead his hearers away from it in discourse. And for my part, Phædrus, I set this to the account of the deities of the spot; or it may be that the ministers of the Muses, our songsters overhead, have breathed into us this happy gift. For sure I am that I at least am innocent of any art of speaking.

Phæd. Be it as you will—only make your meaning clear.

Socrates. Well, then, read me out the beginning of Lysias' speech.

Phæd. With the state of my affairs you are acquainted, and how I expect advantage to us both from this arrangement you have heard. Now I claim not to be disappointed in my suit on the ground of my not happening to be your lover. For lovers repent.

Socrates. Stop—we are to notice, are we not, any error or violation of art that our author commits?

Phæd. We are. 263

Socrates. Well, then, is it not obvious to all the world, that on certain points of this kind we are all agreed, on others all at variance?

Phæd. I think I know what you mean; but explain yourself more clearly.

Socrates. When a man uses the words iron or silver, do we not all understand by them the same things?

Phæd. To be sure we do.

Socrates. But what happens when he talks of justice or virtue? Do we not all start off at once in different directions, and quarrel both with one another and ourselves?

Phæd. Too true.

Socrates. On some things, then, you allow we are agreed, in others not?

Phæd. Just so.

Socrates. Now in which of these two classes of things is deception more easily practised; and in which has rhetoric greater power?

Phæd. Clearly in that in which we are liable to go wrong.

Socrates. Before handling, then, an art of rhetoric, a man ought in the first instance to have methodically distinguished between these two classes, and discovered some characteristic mark of each, of that in which men in general are of necessity in error, and of that where no such necessity exists.

Phæd. A fine generalization certainly, Socrates, would he have devised who had seized on this distinction.

Socrates. And secondly, I imagine, when he comes to any particular case, he must not be at fault, but perceive with rapidity in which of the two classes the subject of his intended remarks is contained.

Phæd. Exactly.

Socrates. Now what do you say to Love? Are we to rank him in the debateable, or certain class?

Phæd. In the debateable, without a doubt. For how else, think you, could I have allowed you to say all that you have just now said about him, making him out at one time to be a curse both to the lover and his favourite; and then again their chiefest blessing?

Socrates. Admirably said: but tell me this too—for I, you must know, was in such an ecstatic state, that

I do not quite remember—did I give a definition of Love at the beginning of my speech?

Phæd. Aye, that you did, and a wonderfully thorough one too.

Socrates. Alas for Lysias, son of Cephalus! How far less skilled do you make him in the art of speech-writing than the nymphs of our river and Pan the son of Hermes; or am I altogether wrong, and did Lysias also, at the commencement of his love-speech, compel us to form some one definite conception of love—the conception that he himself preferred—and then proceed, in strict accordance with this conception, to arrange all the subsequent parts of his discourse till he brought it to a fitting conclusion? Just let us read the opening sentence again.

Phæd. I will if you wish it, though what you are looking for is not there.

Socrates. Let us hear it, that we may take his own evidence on the point.

Phæd. "With the state of my affairs you are acquainted, and how I expect advantage to us both from this arrangement, you have heard. Now I claim not to be disappointed in my suit on the ground of my 264
not belonging to the number of your lovers; for they, indeed, repent of the benefits they have conferred as soon as they are released from their passion."

Socrates. Yes, we seem to be far indeed from discovering here what we are looking for, when we find our author not even starting from the beginning, but from the end of his subject, and essaying to get through his discourse like a swimmer on his back—the wrong way foremost; for you see he commences with what the lover might be supposed to say to his favourite at the end, and not before the end, of his address. Or do you see nothing in my objection, Phædrus, noble friend?

Phæd. Yes, I must confess, Socrates, that what he is talking about is a natural conclusion of the subject.

Socrates. And what do you say to the rest? Do not the several parts of his discourse appear to have been thrown together at random? or do you see some neces-

sity for the second sentence occupying the second place, or any other sentence appearing in the position he has assigned it? For my part, I must confess that he seems to me, in my ignorance, to have put down on paper, with a gentlemanly independence, whatever came first into his head; but you, perhaps, are aware of some law of composition which guided his sentences into that particular order.

Phæd. You are too good to suppose me capable of seeing through the design of a Lysias with so critical an eye.

Socrates. But this I think you will allow, that every speech ought to be put together like a living creature, with a body of its own, lacking neither head nor foot, but having both a middle and extremities in perfect keeping with one another and the whole.

Phæd. Undoubtedly.

Socrates. Examine, then, whether your friend's speech be composed on this principle or not, and you will find it just like the epigram which people say is inscribed on the tomb of Midas, the Phrygian.

Phæd. What is the epigram, and what is there peculiar about it?

Socrates. It runs thus:

I am a maiden of brass, and I lie upon Midas's tomb:
Ever while water shall flow, and the trees of the forest shall bloom
Here will I stay on a grave that is watered with many a tear,
Telling to all who pass by me that Midas is sepulchred here.

Now, that it is utterly immaterial whether any line of this epigram be put first or last, you must, I should think, have observed.

Phæd. You make very merry with our speech, Socrates.

Socrates. Well, Phædrus, to spare your feelings, suppose we pass it by; not but that I conceive it to contain a crowd of examples, which a man might study with advantage to himself, provided only he does not at all attempt to imitate them; and let us proceed to the other two speeches, for there was something in them, I imagine, well worthy the attention of those
265 who wish to consider the subject of speaking.

Phæd. What sort of thing do you mean?

Socrates. If I remember right, they were opposed to each other; the one supporting the claims of the impassioned; and the other, those of the unimpassioned suitor.

Phæd. And right manfully they did their work.

Socrates. I thought you were going to say, as the truth would warrant, right madly. However, this is the very point I was in quest of. We said that love was a madness, did we not?

Phæd. We did.

Socrates. And that madness was of two kinds, the one produced by human disease, the other by an inspired departure from established usages.

Phæd. Exactly.

Socrates. And the inspired we divided into four parts, and distributing them among four heavenly powers, we set down the madness of prophecy to the inspiration of Apollo; of mysteries, to the inspiration of Dionysus; to the Muses again we ascribed the madness of poesy; and the fourth, to Aphrodite and Eros. And this last, the madness of love, we said was the best of all the four; and expressing the affection of love by a strange kind of similitude, wherein we kept, I doubt not, some true principle in our sight, though haply we swerved into error on our path, we compounded a discourse not altogether without plausibility, and sang a mythical hymn in seemly and pious adoration of my lord and thine, Phædrus — of Eros, the patron of beautiful boys.

Phæd. And one, I can assure you, which it afforded me no slight pleasure to hear.

Socrates. Let us now, by an examination of the speech itself, discover how it was that it found means of passing from censure to praise.

Phæd. Well. And how was it?

Socrates. You must know that I consider the speech itself, in its general character, to be nothing more than a sportive effusion; but throughout all that was thus casually uttered, there are two forms of method apparent which would well repay our attention, if we

could but obtain a systematic view of their respective efficiency.

Phæd. What are they, pray?

Socrates. The first consists in comprehending at a glance, whenever a subject is proposed, all the widely scattered particulars connected with it, and bringing them together under one general idea, in order that, by a precise definition, we may make every one understand what it is that at the time we are intending to discuss. And this plan we just now, as you remember, adopted with regard to love: we defined its nature; and whatever be the merit of the performance, certain it is that to that definition my speech owes its clearness and consistency.

Phæd. And what is your other method, Socrates?

Socrates. That, on the other hand, enables us to separate a general idea into its subordinate elements, by dividing it at the joints, as nature directs, and not attempting to break any limb in half, after the fashion of a bungling carver. And this plan was followed in my two speeches with regard to mental derangement.
a66 Just as from one body there proceed two sets of members, called by the same name, but distinguished as right and left, so when my speeches had formed the general conception of mental derangement, as constituting by nature one class within us, the speech which had to divide the left-hand portion desisted not from dividing it into smaller, and again smaller parts, till it found among them a kind of left-handed love, which it railed at with well-deserved severity; while the other led us to the right-hand side of madness, where it discovered a love bearing indeed the same name as the former, but of an opposite and a godly sort, which it held up to be gazed at and lauded as the author of our greatest blessings.

Phæd. Perfectly true.

Socrates. Now, not only do I pursue myself, with all a lover's assiduity, these methods of decomposing and combining, but if ever I find any one else whom I judge capable of apprehending the one and the many as they are in nature, that man "I follow behind, as though in

the track of a god." And to all who are possessed of this power I have been in the habit of giving, whether rightly or wrongly, heaven knows, the name of dialecticians. But tell me, what is the proper name for the disciples of your school and Lysias's? is yours that identical art of words by the use of which Thrasymachus and his compeers have not only become clever speakers themselves, but make such of all their pupils, who are willing to bring them presents, as though they were kings?

Phæd. And men of kingly mould they are, though certainly not acquainted with that about which you are now inquiring. However, you appear to me to be quite right in calling this kind of method dialectical; but the rhetorical, I take it, still eludes our grasp.

Socrates. Indeed! a fine thing truly that must be which, not comprised in this, is yet apprehended by art. On no account must it be slighted by you and me—come now, let us consider what it is that is left to rhetoric.

Phæd. Oh, you'll find plenty of it, I doubt not, Socrates, if you'll only look in the books written on the art of speech-making.

Socrates. True, and I am obliged to you for reminding me. We must have, in the first place, I think, an exordium delivered at the opening of the speech. This is what you mean—is it not? the refinements of the art?

Phæd. Yes.

Socrates. And next we must have narration, they say, and evidence to back it, and thirdly proofs, and fourthly probabilities; and there's confirmation, if I remember right, and after-confirmation to boot, according to that prime tricker-out of speeches who comes from Byzantium.

Phæd. Worthy Theodorus, eh?

Socrates. Exactly. He gives us rules too for refuta- 267
tion and after-refutation, both in charge and defence. But the Parian wonder, Evenus, we must not leave in the background, who was the first to discover subintimation and bye-panegyric; nay, they tell me he repeats his bye-censures in verse, to aid the memory.

So clever is he. Can we pass over in silence either Tisias and Gorgias, who were enabled to see that the probable ought to be more highly prized than the true; who make small things appear great, and great things small, by force of words; who talk of what is new as though it were old, and of what is old as though it were new; and who have invented for every subject a terse brevity and illimitable prolixity? Once though, when I told Prodicus of this, he burst out a-laughing, and said that none but himself had discovered what kind of speeches were required by art. We must have them, says he, neither long nor short, but of moderate length.

Phæd. Cleverly said, Prodicus.

Socrates. But we must not forget Hippias; for I fancy our friend from Elis would be on the same side with him of Ceos.

Phæd. Doubtless.

Socrates. But where shall we find words for all Polus's museum of ornaments—his jingle-making, maxim-making, image-making, and all the pretty expressions which he borrowed from his master Licymnius, to create a harmonious diction?

Phæd. Was not this though, Socrates, something in the style of Protagoras?

Socrates. A correctness of diction, young sir, was what he taught, and a great many other fine things too. But in the art of dragging in piteous whinings on poverty and age, there never was, I believe, such a master as the hero of Chalcedon. He was a terrible man, too, for rousing the passions of a crowd, and lulling them again when roused, by the magic of his song, as he used to say; and at raising or rebutting a calumny on any ground whatsoever, he was eminently expert. To come, however, to the conclusion of the speech, that is, I imagine, a point on which all men are agreed, though some call it recapitulation, and others by some different title.

Phæd. You mean, the summarily reminding the hearers at the end of the speech of all that has been said in the course of it?

Socrates. Yes; and now have you anything else to tell me about the art of speaking?

Phæd. Only a few trifling matters not worth mentioning.

Socrates. Well, if they are trifling, let us pass them 268
by, and rather hold up these we have got to the light, that we may discern the character and sphere of their efficiency in art.

Phæd. There is no doubt of its being a very powerful one, Socrates; in popular assemblies, at any rate.

Socrates. None, I am aware; but look at them, my good sir, and see whether you do not observe, as I do, some flaw in their texture.

Phæd. Point it out, will you?

Socrates. Well, answer me this. Suppose a man were to call upon your friend Eryximachus, or his father Acumenus, and say, I know how to make such applications to the body as will create either heat or cold, as I please; and if I think proper, I can produce vomitings and purgings, and a great variety of similar effects. And, on the strength of this knowledge, I flatter myself that I am a physician, and able to make a physician of any one to whom I may communicate the knowledge of these matters. What do you think would be their answer on hearing this?

Phæd. Why, they would, of course, ask him whether he also knew to what objects, at what times, and to what extent, these modes of treatment ought severally to be applied.

Socrates. And if he were to answer, Oh, I know nothing of the kind; but I expect that my pupil will be able to act in all these matters for himself, as soon as he has learnt the secrets I mentioned?

Phæd. Why then they would doubtless say, The man is mad; he has been hearing some book read, or he has fallen in with some nostrum or other, and fancies himself in consequence a made physician, while in reality he knows nothing at all about the art.

Socrates. And what if a man were to go up to Sophocles and Euripides, and tell them that he knew how to make a very long harangue on a small matter,

and again, a very short harangue on a great matter; that he could write at will in a pathetic or in a bold and menacing tone; that he possessed a variety of similar accomplishments, and that by giving lessons in such he conceived himself to be imparting the power of writing tragedy?

Phæd. Well, they too, I imagine, Socrates, would burst into a laugh at the notion of tragedy being made up of these elements, without regard being paid to their consistency with one another and the whole in the combination.

Socrates. True, but they would not, I conceive, rail at him coarsely, but would rather adopt the tone a musician would use on meeting with a man who esteemed himself a harmonist, because, as he said, he happened to know how to draw from a chord the highest and lowest possible notes. For the musician, I imagine, would not fiercely say to such a person, You wretched fellow, you are stark mad: but, with the gentleness that music inspires, would reply, It is doubtless necessary, my excellent friend, for these matters to be understood by the intended harmonist, but there is nothing in the world to hinder a person who knows all that you know from being altogether ignorant of harmony: for the acquirements which you possess are the necessary preliminaries to harmony, and not harmony itself.

Phæd. And a very proper answer, too.

269 *Socrates.* And in like manner, Sophocles might reply to the tragic pretender, that he knew the preliminaries to tragedy, but not tragedy itself; and Acumenus to the medical pretender, that he knew the preliminaries to medicine, but not medicine itself.

Phæd. Most assuredly they might.

Socrates. And lastly, what answer might we expect from the honied tones of our Athenian Adrastus, or from the great Pericles himself, were they to hear of the splendid devices which we have just now enumerated, of the maxim-makings, image-makings, and all the other makings, of which we concluded the list by remarking, that they deserved to be scrutinized in a

clearer light? Would they follow, do you imagine, our rude example, and be so boorish as to give vent to ill-mannered expressions against those who have written on, and give lessons in these artifices, as though they constituted the art of rhetoric: or would they, as being wiser than we, turn upon us reprovingly, and say, Phædrus and Socrates, you do not well to be angry, but should rather make all allowance, if people ignorant of dialectics have been found unable to define what rhetoric is, and, as the natural result of this ignorance, have conceived themselves inventors of an art of rhetoric because they happen to possess the acquirements which must of necessity precede the art; and if, again, they believe that by teaching these acquirements to others they have imparted to them rhetoric in perfection, while they say nothing about the power of using each of them persuasively, or of combining them into one general whole, but leave it, as a trifling matter, to the pupils themselves, to furnish, out of their own unaided resources, in the speeches they may have to compose?

Phæd. Well, certainly, Socrates, I am afraid that such is very much the character of the art which these people teach both in lecture and writing; and I must confess I think you have spoken the truth. But do now tell me by what means, and from what source, we may acquire the real art of rhetorical persuasion.

Socrates. The power, Phædrus, of becoming a consummate workman therein, is probably, or I should rather say, is of necessity, subject to a universal law. If you are endowed by nature with a genius for speaking, you will be a distinguished speaker, if you add thereto science and practice; but in whichever of these three requisites you are wanting, you will by so much fall short of perfection. However, for all of it that is art, the true method will not, I think, be found on the road whereon Tisias and Thrasymachus are travelling.

Phæd. On what road then?

Socrates. Pericles would seem, my good friend, not without reason, to have become the most perfect orator that ever lived.

Phæd. How so?

Socrates. All the higher arts require, over and above their immediate discipline, a subtle and speculative
270 acquaintance with physical science; it being, I imagine, by some such door as this that there enters that elevation of thought and universal mastery over the subject in hand. Now Pericles added these advantages to that of great natural genius. For he fell into the hands, if I mistake not, of Anaxagoras, a teacher of such studies, and being by him stored with abstruse speculation, and led to penetrate into the nature of the intelligent and unintelligent principle—subjects which occupied, you are aware, the main place in his master's discourse—he draughted from those researches into the art of speaking the investigations suitable for it.

Phæd. How do you mean?

Socrates. The case, I imagine, is the same with the art of rhetoric as it is with that of medicine.

Phæd. In what way?

Socrates. In both it is necessary to investigate nature; the nature of the body in the one, and of the soul in the other, if you intend to follow a scientific principle, and not a mere empirical routine, in the application of such medicine and diet to the former as will produce in it health and strength, and of such words and rightful culture to the latter as will impart to it the desired persuasion and virtue.

Phæd. This seems reasonable at any rate, Socrates.

Socrates. Now, do you conceive it possible to comprehend satisfactorily the nature of the soul without comprehending the nature of the universe?

Phæd. Why, if credit is to be given to Hippocrates, of the line of Æsculapius, the nature of the body even cannot be comprehended without this investigation.

Socrates. He says well, Phædrus. However, we must not be content with the evidence of Hippocrates, but, interrogating the argument itself, observe if it be consistent.

Phæd. True.

Socrates. Observe, then, with regard to nature what is maintained by Hippocrates and the truth. Is it not thus that they bid us examine into a thing's nature?

In the first place, we are to inquire whether that is simple or manifold in which we wish to be scientifically proficient ourselves, and able to render others such also: secondly, if it be simple, we are to examine what power it possesses by nature of acting, and of acting upon what, or what susceptibility of being acted upon, and what it is that acts upon it; if it comprise a number of kinds, we are to enumerate these kinds, and observe with regard to each of them, as in the simple case, its properties, whether active or passive.

Phæd. Yes, this seems to be the way, Socrates.

Socrates. At any rate, the method which neglected these investigations would be no better than a blind man's walk. But surely we must never compare the scientific follower of any pursuit to a blind or a deaf man. No; it is evident that whosoever teaches speaking on scientific principles, will accurately explain the essential nature of that to which his pupil will have to address his speeches. And this, if I mistake not, will be the soul.

Phæd. Indisputably.

Socrates. Against this then all his battle is directed; 271
for in this it is that he endeavours to effect persuasion. Is it not so?

Phæd. Yes.

Socrates. It is obvious, therefore, that Thrasymachus and every one else who seriously communicates an art of rhetoric, will, in the first place, with all accuracy notice and make apparent whether the soul be single and uniform by nature, or, like the body, of many different kinds—this being the process which we maintain to be revealing nature.

Phæd. Precisely.

Socrates. Secondly, he will explain in what part it is active, and upon what it acts; in what part passive, and by what it is acted upon.

Phæd. To be sure he will.

Socrates. And thirdly, when he has ranged in order the different kinds of speech and different kinds of soul, and their different conditions, he will enumerate all causes that act, and suiting kind by kind, will show

what sort of soul is of necessity persuaded, or not persuaded, by what sort of speech, and for what reason, in either case.

Phæd. At any rate, his work would to all appearance be best done by this method.

Socrates. Never, I can assure you, my friend, will aught spoken or explained on a different method be spoken or explained on a scientific method, either in this case or any other. But our modern authors, whom you wot of, of arts of rhetoric, are crafty dissemblers, and manage to keep out of view their exquisite insight into the nature of the soul. Till, then, they both speak and write in this manner, let us not accord to them that they speak and write scientifically.

Phæd. What manner do you mean by *this?*

Socrates. To dictate the exact forms of expression were no easy task; but the general course that a speaker ought to pursue, if he means to perform his work as scientifically as possible, I am prepared to explain.

Phæd. Do so.

Socrates. It being admitted that the efficacy of speech is to win men's souls, it follows of necessity that the intended speaker must be acquainted with all kinds of soul that exist. Now of these kinds there are a certain number, each being of a certain sort; whence result different characters in different individuals. And this division being established, there are again a certain number of kinds of speeches, each of a certain character. Persons, therefore, of a certain character are by speeches of a certain character easily persuaded for certain reasons into certain things, while persons of a different character are under the same circumstances hard to be persuaded. These distinctions, then, must be competently understood; but even when understood, our speaker must be able to follow them rapidly with his perceptive faculties, as they fall under his notice in the course and operation of daily life, or as yet he knows no more of his art than the mere speeches he used to hear from his master at school. But when he is in a condition to say what sort of man is likely to be persuaded by what sort of speech, and on meeting with

an individual in the world, is able to read his character at a glance, and say to himself, Here is the man, and here the nature, for which I heard those speeches from 272
my master, now actually present before me; him, therefore, I must address with this sort of speech, in this sort of manner, if I mean to persuade him to this sort of thing—when, I say, he is possessed of all this knowledge, and has learnt, moreover, the proper time for speaking, and the proper time for being silent, and has further learnt to distinguish between the seasonable and unseasonable use of the style sententious, the style pathetic, the style indignant, and all your other styles of speaking in which he has been instructed, then, I maintain, and not till then, is his art wrought into a beautiful and a perfect work. But if he omit any of these requisites, whether in writing, or teaching, or speaking, while he professes to be performing his work scientifically, the hearer who refuses to be persuaded achieves a victory over him. But, Phædrus, but, Socrates—we shall doubtless hear from our friend the treatise-writer—is this to be your sole art of speaking, or may we put up with one conducted on somewhat different principles?

Phæd. None other, I take it, Socrates, can possibly be allowed, and yet this of yours appears no slight undertaking.

Socrates. True, Phædrus, it is not slight. And for this reason we ought to turn over all their writings again and again, to see whether there be found anywhere an easier and a briefer road to the art, in order that we may not uselessly travel on a long and rough one when we might go by one both smooth and short. So if you have ever heard of anything available for our purpose, either from Lysias, or any other teacher, make an effort to remember and tell it me.

Phæd. If the effort were sufficient, Socrates, I should be able to do so; as it is, I can remember nothing at the moment.

Socrates. What say you then to my repeating a statement which I have heard from certain gentlemen who handle the subject?

Phæd. I should like it of all things.

Socrates. Well, the saying is, you know, Phædrus, that it's fair to state even the wolf's cause.

Phæd. It is, and do you comply with it.

Socrates. I will. They tell me there is no need in the world to treat the matter so solemnly, or to carry it back to so remote a source, by such long meanderings. For there is not the slightest occasion—this we also mentioned at the beginning of our argument—for people, intending to be competent speakers, to have anything at all to do with the truth, about actions just or good, or about men who are such either by nature or education. For in courts of justice, they say, no one troubles himself in the least degree with the truth of these matters, but only with what is plausible, that is to say, with what is likely; to this, therefore, you must give all your attention if you mean to speak by rule of art. Nay, there are occasions when you must not even state facts as they have actually happened, if the story be improbable, but only such as are likely, whether in accusation or defence. And, in short, in whatever you say, it is the probable that you must chiefly aim at, and pay no regard at all to the true. For the observance
273 of this, throughout your speech, will supply you with the entire art.

Phæd. Yes, Socrates, this is exactly the language employed by our professed masters in the art of speaking. I remember, that in the early part of our conversation, we did slightly touch upon this sort of principle, and that this is held to be of paramount importance by the gentlemen of the profession.

Socrates. Nay, Phædrus, I'm sure you have read over and over again the great Tisias himself. So let Tisias tell us in person whether he means anything else by the probable, than what accords with the opinion of the many.

Phæd. What else can I? answers Tisias.

Socrates. On the strength then, I suppose, of this sapient and scientific discovery, he proceeds to announce, that if a weak, but courageous man, is brought to trial for having knocked down and robbed

of his clothes, or purse, a strong and cowardly one, neither accuser nor accused is to tell the truth to the judges, but the coward is to say that the other had assistance when he knocked him down; while the brave man must first prove the fact of their being alone, and then appealing to their favourite probable, exclaim, Why, how could a man like myself have ever thought of attacking a man like that? But the other, you may be sure, is not to plead his own cowardice, but rather essay some fresh falsehood, which will, perhaps, supply his adversary with the means of refuting the accusation. And so, whatever be the matter on hand, this, he says, is the style of pleading warranted by art. Is it not so, Phædrus?

Phæd. It is.

Socrates. Recondite truly is the art, and wonderful the skill of its inventor, be he Tisias, or who he may, and whatever be the name he delights to be called by. But, Phædrus, shall we answer him or not?

Phæd. With what?

Socrates. With this. Long before you joined our conversation, Tisias, we chanced to observe, that this vaunted probability of yours only made itself felt in the minds of the many, by virtue of its resemblance to the truth. And we have since proved, that in all cases the various shades of resemblance are best detected by the man who is best acquainted with the truth in question. So that, if you have anything else to say on the art of speaking, we shall be delighted to hear it; if not, we will abide by our previous position, that unless a speaker has reckoned up the different natures of his hearers, and is able both to separate things into their several kinds, and embrace particulars under one general idea, he will never reach that highest point of excellence in the art which is attainable by the power of man. But this knowledge he can never possibly acquire without great labour; labour which the wise man ought to bestow, not with a view to speaking and acting before the world, but for the sake of making himself able, both by word and deed to please the gods as best he can. For verily, Tisias, so speak wiser men than you or I,

it behoves not the reasonable man to study pleasing
274 fellow-bondsmen, save only if he may in passing, but masters good, and of good descent. If, therefore, our circuit be a long one, marvel not; for it is for the sake of high ends that we have to make it, and not for such as you conceive. Still, even yours, as our argument proves, may be best attained, if you choose to derive them from our source.

Phæd. The ends you speak of, Socrates, are very glorious, I know, if a man could but attain to them.

Socrates. But surely, my friend, if the ends be glorious, all that befalls us in seeking them is glorious also?

Phæd. Indeed it is.

Socrates. So far, then, as regards the scientific and unscientific treatment of discourse: let this suffice.

Phæd. And well it may.

Socrates. But the question of propriety and impropriety in writing, and how to make a composition graceful or inelegant, remains to be considered. Does it not?

Phæd. Yes.

Socrates. Are you aware, Phædrus, by what conduct or language, with respect to speaking, a man will please God best?

Phæd. Not at all;—are you?

Socrates. At any rate I can tell you a story of the ancients on the subject. Whether it be true or not, they know themselves; but if haply *we* could find the truth, could we possibly, think you, pay heed any longer to the opinions of men?

Phæd. That would be indeed ridiculous; but pray tell me the story you say you have heard.

Socrates. Well, I heard that in the neighbourhood of Naucratis, in Egypt, there lived one of the ancient gods of that country; the same to whom that holy bird is consecrated which they call, as you know, Ibis, and whose own name was Theuth. He, they proceed, was the first to invent numbers and arithmetic, and geometry and astronomy; draughts moreover, and dice, and, above all, letters. Now the whole of Egypt was at that time under the sway of Thamus, who resided near the

capital city of the upper region, which the Greeks call Egyptian Thebes. The god himself they called Ammon. To him, therefore, Theuth repaired; and, displaying his inventions, recommended their general diffusion among the Egyptians. The king asked him the use of each, and received his explanations, as he thought them good or bad, with praise or censure. Now on each of the arts Thamus is reported to have said a great deal to Theuth, both in its favour and disfavour. It would take a long story to repeat it all. But when they came to the letters, Theuth began: "This invention, O king, will make the Egyptians wiser, and better able to remember, it being a medicine which I have discovered both for memory and wisdom." The king replied: "Most ingenious Theuth, one man is capable of giving birth to an art, another of estimating the amount of good or harm it will do to those who are intended to use it. And so now you, as being the father of letters, have 275
ascribed to them, in your fondness, exactly the reverse of their real effects. For this invention of yours will produce forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn it, by causing them to neglect their memory, inasmuch as, from their confidence in writing, they will recollect by the external aid of foreign symbols, and not by the internal use of their own faculties. Your discovery, therefore, is a medicine not for memory, but for recollection,—for recalling to, not for keeping in mind. And you are providing for your disciples a show of wisdom without the reality. For, acquiring by your means much information unaided by instruction, they will appear to possess much knowledge, while, in fact, they will, for the most part, know nothing at all; and, moreover, be disagreeable people to deal with, as having become wise in their own conceit, instead of truly wise."

Phæd. You possess a facility, Socrates, for making up tales of Egypt, or any other strange country you please.

Socrates. We are told, my friend, that the voice of an oak, in the holy ground of Zeus of Dodona, was the first ever gifted with prophecy. The men of those days, not

being clever like you moderns, were content, in their simplicity, to listen to an oak or a stone, if only it spake the truth. But to you, it seems, it makes a difference who the speaker is, and from what country he comes; you do not merely consider whether the fact be, or be not, as he states it.

Phæd. Your reproof is just. And I believe the truth, with regard to letters, to be as the Theban pronounces.

Socrates. He, therefore, who leaves behind him, and he again who receives an art in writing, with the idea that anything clear or fixed is to proceed from the writing, must be altogether a foolish-minded person, and, in truth, ignorant of Ammon's prediction, as he must suppose that written words can do something more than recall the things of which they treat to the mind of one who knows them already.

Phæd. Most true.

Socrates. For this, I conceive, Phædrus, is the evil of writing, and herein it closely resembles painting. The creatures of the latter art stand before you as if they were alive, but if you ask them a question, they look very solemn, and say not a word. And so it is with written discourses. You could fancy they speak as though they were possessed of sense, but if you wish to understand something they say, and question them about it, you find them ever repeating but one and the self-same story. Moreover, every discourse, once written, is tossed about from hand to hand, equally among those who understand it, and those for whom it is in nowise fitted; and it does not know to whom it ought, and to whom it ought not, to speak. And when misunderstood and unjustly attacked, it always needs its father to help it; for, unaided, it can neither retaliate, nor defend itself.

Phæd. This again is most true.

276 *Socrates.* But, hold! Is there not another kind of discourse,—this one's legitimate brother? Let us see both how it arises, and how far more excellent and efficient than the other it grows.

Phæd. What discourse do you mean, and how does it take its rise?

Socrates. I mean that which is written with insight in the learner's mind, which is at once able to defend itself, and knows before whom to speak, and before whom to be silent.

Phæd. You mean the wise man's discourse, which is possessed both of life and soul, and of which the written one may fairly be called a shadow?

Socrates. Most assuredly I do. But come now, answer me this. If a prudent husbandman had seeds which he cared for, and wished to come to fruit, would he seriously sow them in summer-time, in the gardens of Adonis, and delight to behold them growing up finely in eight days? or, if he did this at all, would he not do it as the mere pastime of a holiday; but, with all the aid of his husbandman's art, sow the seeds, on which he set serious store, in their proper soil, and be content to see them in the eighth month arrived at their maturity?

Phæd. Yes, of course, Socrates; he would do the one seriously, and the other, as you say, by way of amusement.

Socrates. And shall we say that he who has an insight into the just, the beautiful, and the good, shows less wisdom in the treatment of his seeds than the husbandman?

Phæd. God forbid.

Socrates. He will not then seriously set himself to write them in water, sowing them with ink by means of a pen, with the aid of words that are unable to defend themselves by speaking, and unable adequately to teach the truth?

Phæd. Certainly, we may expect he will not.

Socrates. Indeed we may. But in the gardens of letters he will sow his seeds, I imagine, and write, when he does write, for mere amusement, treasuring up aids to the memory both for himself, when he comes to the years of forgetfulness, and for all who are following on the same road. And he will please himself with watching his plants in their tender growth. And while others are indulging in other recreations, refreshing themselves it may be with feast and kindred pleasure,

he, if I mistake not, will in place of such amusements be spending his holiday in the pastime I mention.

Phæd. And a noble pastime it is, Socrates, by the side of but a poor one, when a man who can make discourses his play diverts himself with telling stories about justice and virtue.

Socrates. Yes, my dear Phædrus, it is noble; but far nobler, I imagine, is a man's work on these matters, when finding a congenial soul, he avails himself of the dialectical art to sow and plant therein scientific words, which are competent to defend themselves, and him who planted them, and are not unfruitful, but bear seed in their turn, from which other words springing up in
277 other minds are capable of preserving this precious seed ever undecaying, and making their possessor ever happy, so far as happiness is possible for man.

Phæd. Yes, Socrates, this is indeed far nobler than the other.

Socrates. Now then, Phædrus, that this point is settled, we are in a condition, you will observe, to decide on our former questions.

Phæd. Which do you mean?

Socrates. Those which led us in our desire to solve them to the point where we are at present arrived; one being to examine the deservedness of the reproach cast on Lysias for writing speeches; the other, to discover, with regard to speeches themselves, what were written according to, and what without, rule of art. Now this distinction appears to me to have been marked with sufficient clearness.

Phæd. And so it did to me; but I should be glad to be reminded of it again.

Socrates. Before a speaker is acquainted with the true nature of each subject on which he speaks or writes, and is become able to give it a general definition, and then again knows how to divide it into kinds till he reaches the indivisible; before he has investigated in like manner the nature of the soul, and finding the kind of discourse suitable for each kind of soul, orders and embellishes his discourse accordingly; offering to complex souls discourses of complex structure and rich in

every harmony; but simple discourses to simple souls: before, I say, he is able to understand and do all this, he cannot possibly handle discourse with the art of which it admits, whether his object be to instruct or persuade, as the whole of our previous argument has tended to prove.

Phæd. Yes, this is pretty nearly just as I thought it was.

Socrates. But what are we to say with respect to the honour or disgrace of writing and speaking, and the conditions under which they may justly incur or avoid reproach? Have not our late arguments sufficed to show?

Phæd. What?

Socrates. That if Lysias or any one else has ever written, or means to write, either a private book, or a public document in the shape of a law, with the idea that his writing contains a great certainty and clearness; in this case reproach attaches to the writer, whether people say so or not. For a total blindness with regard to justice and injustice, to virtue and vice, escapes not in sooth the charge of being truly disgraceful, even though it has been lauded by all the world.

Phæd. No; indeed it does not.

Socrates. But whoever believes that in a written discourse, whatever be the subject, there must of necessity be much that is sportive; and that no discourse worthy of serious attention has ever, either in verse or prose, been written or spoken—if spoken in the way that our declamations are recited, by rote, without examination or instruction, merely to persuade—but that the very best of them are nothing else than reminders to know- 278
ledge; whoever believes this, and believes on the other hand, that in discourses, and only in discourses taught, and for the sake of instruction spoken and really written in the soul of the hearer, about things just and beautiful and good, there is found what is clear and perfect, and worthy of attention; and that such discourses ought to be accounted his own legitimate offspring; first, the one in his own mind, if it be there by his own discovery; then those which children or brothers of the former

have either after or at the same time sprung up worthily in the minds of others: whoever, I say, thinks this of these discourses, and cares for none beside, will go near, Phædrus, to be such a man as you and I would pray we might both become.

Phæd. Yes, Socrates, with all my heart I wish and pray for such a lot.

Socrates. Be we then content to have amused ourselves thus far with the subject of speaking; and go you now, Phædrus, and tell Lysias, that you and I went down together to the spring and favoured haunt of the nymphs, where we heard words which bade us tell Lysias and all writers of speeches; Homer, and all makers of poetry, without music or with; Solon, and all framers of political writings under the name of laws; that if they composed their works with a knowledge of the truth, and with ability to defend them if brought to account, and with the power, moreover, of making by the words of their mouth the writings of their pen appear but poor, they ought not to be named from these holiday productions, but from those which formed their earnest work.

Phæd. What are the names then that you accord them?

Socrates. To call them wise, Phædrus, seems to me indeed to be a great matter, and beseeming God alone. Lovers of wisdom (philosophers), or some name of this kind, would both suit them better and be in better taste.

Phæd. And nothing at all out of the way either.

Socrates. But the man, on the other hand, who has nothing more precious to show than what he long tortured his brain to write or compose, with elaborate patching and careful retrenching, that man, I conceive, you may justly denominate either poet, or speech-writer, or writer of laws.

Phæd. Justly indeed.

Socrates. Go then, tell this to your friend.

Phæd. But you, Socrates, what will you do? We must not pass over your friend either.

Socrates. Whom do you mean?

Phæd. Isocrates the fair. What message will you take him, Socrates? What shall we say that he is?

Socrates. Isocrates is still young, Phædrus; what I augur of him, however, I am willing to tell you.

Phæd. What is that, pray? 279

Socrates. I think better of his genius than to compare it with the speech-writing of Lysias. Moreover, I account him endued with a nobler nature. So that there will be nothing surprising if, as he advances in years, he will in the art of speaking even, to which he is now applying himself, leave all who have hitherto handled it, far as children behind him; and nothing surprising either if he be not content with such achievements, but be led by a godlier impulse to holier and higher things. For nature, my friend, has implanted a love of wisdom in the mind of the man. This then is the message I will take from the gods of the spot to Isocrates as my favourite, and do you take the one I gave you to Lysias, as yours.

Phæd. It shall be done—but let us depart, the rather as the heat of the day is over.

Socrates. Were it not better to offer up a prayer to these gods before we go?

Phæd. Oh yes.

Socrates. Beloved Pan, and all ye other gods who here abide, grant me to be beautiful in the inner man, and all I have of outer things to be at peace with those within. May I count the wise man only rich. And may my store of gold be such as none but the good can bear.

Phædrus, need we anything more? For myself I have prayed enough.

Phæd. For me too pray the same. Friends share and share alike.

Socrates. Let us go.

END OF VOL. I

MADE AT THE
TEMPLE PRESS
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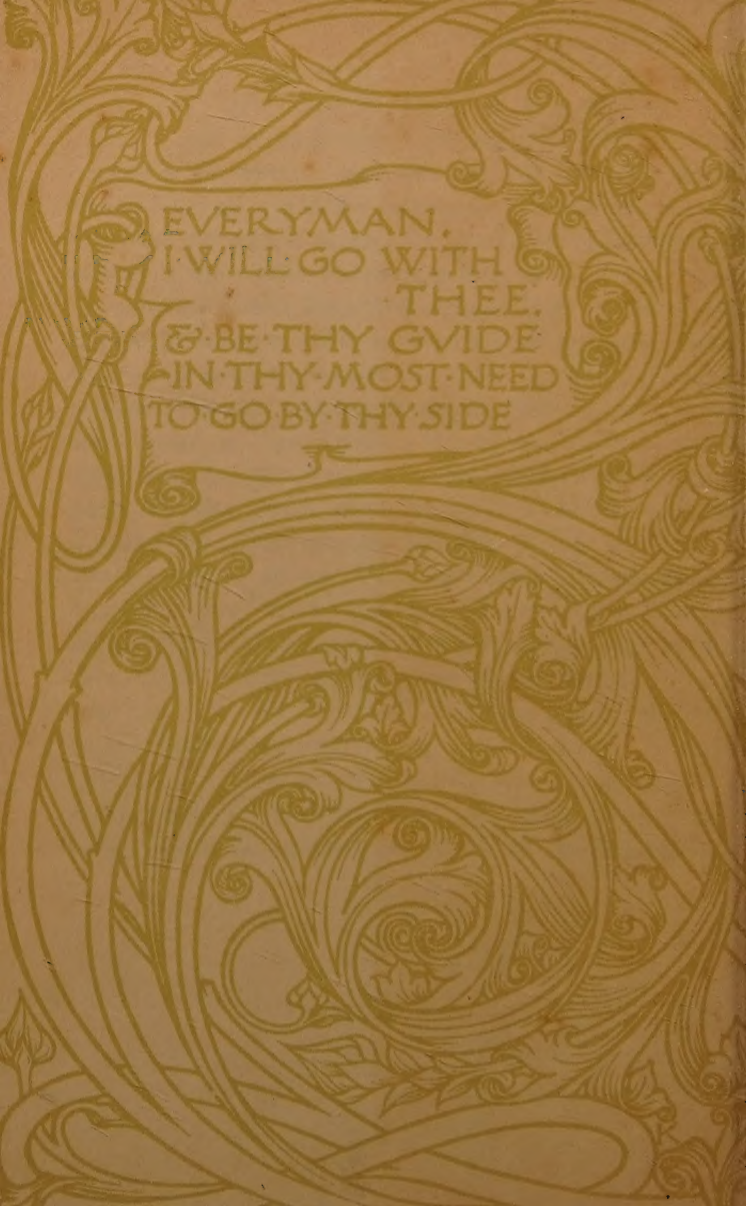
EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY

By ERNEST RHYS

VICTOR HUGO said a Library was "an act of faith," and some unknown essayist spoke of one so beautiful, so perfect, so harmonious in all its parts, that he who made it was smitten with a passion. In that faith the promoters of Everyman's Library planned it out originally on a large scale; and their idea in so doing was to make it conform as far as possible to a perfect scheme. However, perfection is a thing to be aimed at and not to be achieved in this difficult world; and since the first volumes appeared, now several years ago, there have been many interruptions. A great war has come and gone; and even the City of Books has felt something like a world commotion. Only in recent years is the series getting back into its old stride and looking forward to complete its original scheme of a Thousand Volumes. One of the practical expedients in that original plan was to divide the volumes into sections, as Biography, Fiction, History, Belles Lettres, Poetry, Romance, and so forth; with a compartment for young people, and last, and not least, one of Reference Books. Beside the dictionaries and encyclopædias to be expected in that section, there was a special set of literary and historical atlases. One of these atlases dealing with Europe, we may recall, was directly affected by the disturbance of frontiers during the war; and the maps had to be completely revised in consequence, so as to chart

the New Europe which we hope will now preserve its peace under the auspices of the League of Nations set up at Geneva.

That is only one small item, however, in a library list which runs already to the final centuries of the Thousand. The largest slice of this huge provision is, as a matter of course, given to the tyrannous demands of fiction. But in carrying out the scheme, publishers and editors contrived to keep in mind that books, like men and women, have their elective affinities. The present volume, for instance, will be found to have its companion books, both in the same section and even more significantly in other sections. With that idea too, novels like Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and *Fortunes of Nigel*, Lytton's *Harold* and Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities*, have been used as pioneers of history and treated as a sort of holiday history books. For in our day history is tending to grow more documentary and less literary; and "the historian who is a stylist," as one of our contributors, the late Thomas Seccombe, said, "will soon be regarded as a kind of Phœnix." But in this special department of Everyman's Library we have been eclectic enough to choose our history men from every school in turn. We have Grote, Gibbon, Finlay, Macaulay, Motley, Prescott. We have among earlier books the Venerable Bede and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, have completed a Livy in an admirable new translation by Canon Roberts, while Cæsar, Tacitus, Thucydides and Herodotus are not forgotten.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